

AUSTRALIAN AND BRITISH

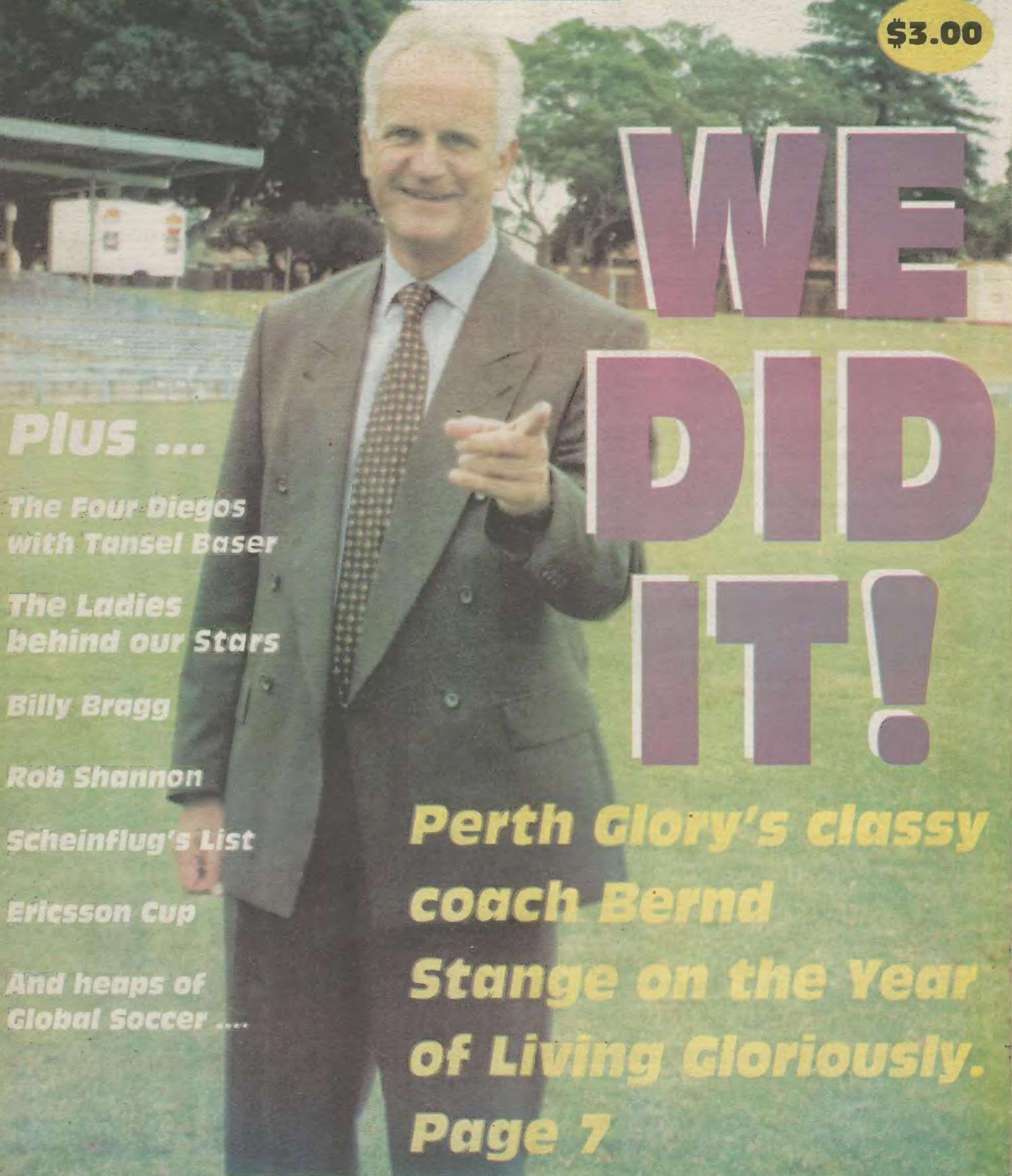
SOCER

VOL. 20 No. 927 · TUESDAY 20 APRIL 1999

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WEEKLY

\$3.00



Plus ...

**The Four Diegos
With Tansel Baser**

**The Ladies
behind our Stars**

Billy Bragg

Rob Shannon

Scheinflug's List

Ericsson Cup

**And heaps of
Global Soccer ...**

**Perth Glory's classy
coach Bernd**

**Stange on the Year
of Living Gloriously.**

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SOCER WEEKLY

AUSSIE & BRITISH SOCCER WEEKLY

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REMINDER

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6. The Diary of Darren Tackle	\$25
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SCHEINFUG'S LITANY OF LAME EXCUSES

By Aidan Ormond

It seems incredible to think that we are even having a debate over the future of failed Young Soccer coach Les Scheinflug. The facts speak for themselves, there is no need to personalise this issue: he has to go.

This should not be seen through a narrow prism of 'old guard v new guard' thinking, it is simply about what is best for Australian soccer.

We failed to qualify from our Nigeria 99 group, with a quality squad, leaking eight goals in the process. We failed to qualify for the last U/17 World Cup. We failed to qualify for the senior Confederations Cup, losing out to New Zealand on home soil. Our '97 and '95 WYC campaigns underachieved. Les Scheinflug was involved in all these campaigns, hence he should shoulder some blame, but more of that later.

If a coach is judged on his results then history will judge him as a success in his first decade or so only. Is it simply the fact that after ten years his coaching style became anachronistic? Did his doctrinaire style finally meet its use by date? Perhaps, but whatever it is, he ain't got it anymore and the results reflect this.

In this last week, to rub salt into our fans' wounds, Scheinflug has affected an annoyingly belligerent approach to the hue and cry over his coaching. Gilby he noted on SBS TV that "I am coaching better than ever", and that the result at Nigeria 99 "meant nothing" and "it was not a bad result". He even said other countries have bad results too! What like Nigeria? They sacked their coach and they did much better than us.

Some of the trite excuses offered by a bumptious Scheinflug included:

1. It was too hot
2. We are semi-pro
3. We are underpaid
4. The crossbar
5. The post
6. The kick-off time
7. Players' weight loss
8. Silly free-kicks
9. His defenders
10. Preparation
11. The food

Perhaps NATO was also to blame?

Furthermore, he belittled and personalised criticisms made of him by respected journalist Michael Cockerill. Scheinflug disingenuously dismissed them as being part of a "vendetta", without ever actually addressing the content (time, results etc.). He also added that Cockerill did not have the knowledge to make such judgements. This is a slight on a quality journalist and the Sydney Morning Herald.

And this country's young coaches also received a

serve. Scheinflug claimed the likes of Farina and Krcevic "were not good enough". We are talking here about knowledgeable Australian born European and national team players with coaching successes under their belts.

To sum up, Scheinflug has held the U/20 job for 18 years. That is long enough. The results in these last six years have been very ordinary given our extraordinary players. Young talented coaches should be given a chance, just like he had when he joined the national coaching set-up some three decades ago.

It's time for new ideas and a fresh approach. And by holding on to Scheinflug it sends out the wrong message — that it is okay to fail, 'she'll be right mate, we will win next time.'

A good role model for him would be fellow German coach, Glory's Bernd Stange. His record and experience speaks for itself (see interview page seven), yet even Stange is man enough to admit to making mistakes.

Thanks to Les Scheinflug, this has been an embarrassing week for Australian soccer. Only Soccer Australia can now restore some pride, and hope, for the future.

When you think of big games in the nineties in Australia, what do you remember? The Argentina World Cup qualifier Sydney 1993? 1993 WYC final? NSL Grand Final in Brisbane in 1996? MCG 1997? The Superstars of Soccer (I am joking!).

On June 12 1999 the fifth 'big' game of this decade will occur. FIFA World All-Stars v Australia at Stadium Australia in front of 110,000 at the official opening.

But be warned. 35,000 tickets have been sold and only 30,000 to the general public are left. The rest of the tickets go to sponsors, season ticket holders, corporate packages etc.

So let's make sure that those going are the best fans in the world i.e. Soccer fans.

And why wouldn't you go? We have it on very good authority that superstar Christian Vieri is heading on down, and Zidane and Beckham are also good chances to front the Aimé Jacquet coached FIFA All-Stars.

Further, there will be a ninety minute entertainment spectacular featuring some of the world's biggest acts (so big that even we are sworn to secrecy).

The world squad will be announced in eight days' time, so get your tickets now before the inevitable rush to see Kewell, Bosnich, Aloisi and Viduka line-up against the creme de la creme of the world, and make it another night to remember for Soccer in this country.



Scheinflug's List ... a sorry tale guaranteed to make you cry.

Australian News

PLAYER OF THE YEAR?



Will Kres be wearing the crown?
Pic by Melbin

By Dwight Tuffnell

It's nearly that time of the year again, where the top six battle it out for the championship. Around this time of year, is when the voting takes place for the end of season awards, voting which is done by the men who take part, the players and coaches.

The four awards that always capture the most attention are: The Warren Medal (Players' Player of the Year), Coach of the Year, Papasavas Medal (Under-21 Player of the Year) and the Goalkeeper of the Year award.

With the awards only a matter of weeks away, Soccer Weekly does a bit of crystal ball gazing and highlights

the most likely candidates for the prizes ...

PABLO CARDODO: SYDNEY OLYMPIC

A couple of years ago, Cardozo, playing for Adelaide Sharks (then West Adelaide), had an ordinary season, scoring a paltry three goals for the whole year.

The following season he improved on that tally dramatically and earned himself a move to Austria.

That didn't work out and when Cardozo returned to Australia it was with Sydney Olympic, where he had started his NSW career. This season, he currently leads the goalscorers table, having netted 17 times after round 28.

A dangerous and thoughtful striker, Cardozo can not only score goals, but regularly sets up his team mates too.

DAVID CLARKSON: SOUTH MELBOURNE

Clarkson is very much an outsider to win the award, but would no doubt be a more serious contender had he not missed several matches through injury.

Nonetheless, Clarkson's performances for South Melbourne have been terrific, so much so that South coach Ange Postecoglou recently rewarded him with a new contract.

A phenomenal work-rate, plus the fact that he never seems to play a bad game, makes him one of the South fans' favourite players.

Clarkson is a real box-to-box midfielder, who isn't blessed with the silky skills that others have.

His goalscoring record isn't fantastic either but when you are as consistent as he is, who cares?

BRAD MALONEY: MARCONI

The Marconi skipper has had a great season in which he regularly found himself on the score-

sheet.

Before round 29, he had 16 goals – not bad for a midfielder – and was second in the goalscoring charts.

At his most dangerous when getting into the box and getting on the end of those chances that he more often than not finds the back of the net with.

At times it seemed he was playing a lone hand in a Marconi squad that has generally underachieved in their stuttering attempt for a finals spot.

KRESIMIR MARUSIC: NORTHERN SPIRIT

Was back to his brilliant best this year after a disappointing stint in Melbourne with Carlton and will be favourite to take out the award this season.

Almost back to the form which saw him win this award in 1997 and was a key component for Northern Spirit's push for a finals berth at the first attempt.

Like fellow midfielder Maloney, he's also chimed in with some important goals.

He will be desperate to atone for losses in the last two Grand Finals with Carlton and Sydney United.

Should the Spirit be unable to get championship suc-



Pablo Cardozo ... his scoring has not taken off recently, but is still in with a chance.

cess in their first year, the Player of the Year award would be some consolation to Marusic.

ROBBIE SLATER: NORTHERN SPIRIT

Returned from successful period in the leagues of Europe to be a part of the exciting new Northern Spirit side.

Coached at Spirit by his old pal, Graham Arnold, Slater has been in fantastic form for the championship contender.

Along with Marusic, Slater is a big reason why Spirit are where they are on the league table.

He has introduced himself to a whole new generation of fans who had previously only seen him in a Socceroo jersey or on television.

His popularity was evident from Spirit's first game, where he quickly established himself as the fans' favourite.

Others to consider – Alex Tobin, Kasey Wehrman, John Buonavoglia, Scott Chipperfield and Vaughan Coveny.

See page four for the rest of the contenders in the various categories.



Dynamic Davey Clarkson ... the South man has had an inspired season.

MARCONI FAIRFIELD v NORTHERN SPIRIT

SUNDAY APRIL 25

AT

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Brad Maloney



Sean Babic



Kim



Dominic Longo

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Australian News

MITCH HOT FAVOURITE

By Dwight Tuffnell

GRAHAM ARNOLD: N. SPIRIT
Arnold, in his first coaching job, has done a marvellous job with Northern Spirit.

Almost all tipped the Spirit to be a threat for the championship but things quite often don't work out to be that simple.

Arnold has had his share of frustrations in the job, like trying to find a striker who finds the back of the net with some regularity. Combining coaching with playing is never easy and in order to what is best for the team, Arnold has played in just about every position on the park, bar goalkeeper.

He hasn't been afraid to introduce youth into his side with previous unknowns such as Paul Henderson and Matthew Langdon playing key roles for most of the season.

DAVE MITCHELL: SYD UTD

It will be nothing short of scandalous if Mitchell is not named as Coach of the Year.

With all the problems that Sydney United have had this year and to still finish in the top two is a miracle.

Sure, the players deserve a lot of credit, but Mitchell has taken a squad that is nowhere near the best in the league, into genuine championship contenders.

Most pundits wrote of the side before the season and still insist that they will fall flat on their face at any moment, but Mitchell continues to defy the critics. Little wonder his name pops up most when talk turns to the next Socceroo coach.

One thing's for sure. If for some reason Sydney

United aren't in the league next season, Mitchell certainly won't be short of coaching offers.

ANGE POSTECOGLOU: S. MELB

Winner of this award last season, Postecoglou's name is certain to be on the list of candidates again this time around.

Although Postecoglou has one of the best squads in the league to work with, it would probably be fair to say that he hasn't been able to field his preferred eleven once this season.

Players going for trials or transferring, injuries and suspensions have all contributed to this and, as a result, South have yet to recapture last season's championship-winning form.

Postecoglou has shown considerable restraint when the media have, quite often this season, pointed this out to him.

But not once had he used the fact that someone always seems to be unavailable as an excuse for South's so-called ordinary form.

BERND STANGE: PERTH GLORY

A smart acquisition by Perth, Stange has impressed just about everybody in Australian soccer.

Coming to this country with high credentials, the affable Stange has taken Perth Glory to the finals for the first time.

A professional through and through, some things in Australian soccer have left him a little mystified – the playing at Knights Stadium for example.

But overall, Stange is enjoying his life in Perth and in charge of the Glory.

Their fans love him and the feeling is mutual. Stange doesn't think much of the Glory's chances for the championship.



Lee Sterrey ...
has done a
magnificent
job at
Newcastle, but
Mitch is the
favourite for
coach of the
year.

There is a long way to go yet, and with Stange in charge, Perth are better equipped than ever to win the title.

LEE STERREY: N. BREAKERS

Like Mitchell, Sterrey has taken a side written off by all and sundry to the precipice of a spot in the finals.

Sterrey, previously a successful youth coach at Marconi, probably won't win the award, but deserves plaudits all the same.

Taking a side that usually finishes at the lower end of the table, Sterrey has injected a new sense of belief into a side that are no longer one of the whipping boys of the competition.

He's also recruited wisely. Along with goalkeeper Bob Catlin, he took John Buonavoglia out of the NSW state league to one of the more dangerous frontmen in the league.

BEST KEEPER?

BOB CATLIN: NEWCASTLE BREAKERS

The veteran keeper, released by Sydney Olympic last season, has been a revelation for Newcastle Breakers. The 33 year old's form for Olympic wasn't too bad last year, but their loss has been Newcastle's gain.

He's been one of the reasons why the Breakers have had such a fine season and is still one of the best custodians in the league.

Now approaching 300 NSL games, Catlin seems to get better and better as his performances between the sticks this year will testify to. Somewhat unfortunately, Catlin's form has meant that promising young keeper Brad Swancott hasn't had much of a look-in.

**PAUL HENDERSON:
NORTHERN SPIRIT**

There was much surprise when Northern Spirit coach Graham Arnold selected Henderson (left) for the Spirit's opening match of the season.

Here was a young unexperienced keeper being played in the club's first game in front of what was expected to be a record crowd.



At the time, Arnold had the more experienced John Perosh and Peter Blazincic at his disposal.

But Henderson has stayed in goal since that first game, hardly putting a foot wrong.

Henderson's competent displays for Spirit have vindicated Arnold's decision to put the very much untried youngster in at the deep end.

DANNY MILOSEVIC: PERTH GLORY

Although unable to displace Anthony Franken from the Perth Glory side at the moment, Milosevic was outstanding for the West Australians before Franken took over.

Milosevic, brought back to Australia from German club Arminia Bielefeld, is Australia's best young keeper.

He is currently being disciplined by Glory coach Bernd Stange for being sent off against Gippsland Falcons. Milosevic is unlikely to make that sort of mistake when he gets back into the team. The 20 year old came on to the scene with Canberra Cosmos before heading for Europe.

JASON PETKOVIC: AD CITY

The elder of the Petkovic brothers won this award last season and with just goals conceded before round 29 will be hard to beat again this year.

Possessing a fine all-round game, Petkovic is probably the best Australian keeper not to be playing overseas.

Keeping things simple is what Petkovic does best, not resorting to showiness or making saves look tougher than what they actually are.

The 26 year old took over from Robert Zabica and has not missed a game in that period.

His consistency in that time has been first-class rarely has he looked anything less than a quality keeper.

**MICHAEL PETKOVIC:
SOUTH MELB**

Petkovic (left) has been terrific for South Melbourne this season, easily his best for the club.

Like his brother Jason, Michael has few flaws in his game and the gap between the two is getting smaller and smaller, if there's a gap at all.

South coach Ange Postecoglou doesn't seem to think so, he said that Michael is the best keeper in Australia on a number of occasions.

Petkovic will sooner rather than later join the legion of Aussie keepers overseas. Trials over the last couple of years may not have worked out yet but someone is bound to snap him up.

Like his brother, he doesn't go in for the flashy antics that a lot of keepers indulge in and has been a safe and consistent performer for a couple of years now.

OPEN FIELD FOR U/21 AWARD

By Dwight Tuffnell

JASON CULINA: OLYMPIC

It is hard to believe that Culina is still only 18 years of age. Seemingly to have been around for ages, Culina has been a Young Socceroo and Olyroo at the same time, and was even in the Socceroo squad for the friendly against the United States.

He was one of Australia's best in Nigeria and, along with his Sydney Olympic team mate Brett Emerton, has been sorely missed, as coach Branko Culina said after the recent loss to Melbourne Knights.

Recently, his proposed move to Danish club Brondby fell through, but it is a matter of time before he is lost to an overseas club.

BRETT EMERTON: OLYMPIC

Emerton won this award last season and has to be a contender to take it out again.

Whilst he will be in the running for the award, it's fair to say that Emerton hasn't quite been in the form that he was last year.

Probably, the most gifted young player in Australia today, Emerton has an enormous future in front of him.

Unlike others, he has resisted the temptation to move overseas – although it can't be far away – preferring clubs to speak to him rather than engage in the lottery that is an overseas trial.

Olyroo captain and senior Socceroo, Emerton, one day, will make Sydney Olympic a lot of money.

JOEL GRIFFITHS: SYD UTD

Griphths has come from absolutely nowhere to be part of a side that is seriously pushing for a championship.

No one, outside of Sydney that is, had heard of Griffiths before bursting onto the scene this season.

A string of exceptional performances and eight goals later, everyone now knows of his talents.

He and his partner up front, Mile Sterjovski, have scored 22 goals between them this season.

His speed has worried many a defender and, combined with Sterjovski's finishing, it's not hard to see why both of them made it to the Young Socceroo squad for the World Youth Championships.

MATT LANGDON: N. SPIRIT

May be a bit of a dark horse for the award, but Langdon has impressed more than a few people this season.

Surprisingly left out of the Young Socceroo squad for Nigeria, Langdon has been outstanding for Northern Spirit since making his debut back in round eight.

His coach, Graham Arnold, has said that Langdon was the find of the season for Spirit, who has grabbed his opportunity with both hands.

It says much of his ability that he has been able to win a spot in what is a strong side and keep it for the majority of the season.

Several assured displays on the left hand side for Spirit have caught the eye with his ability to take on and beat players a feature of his game.

MILE STERJOVSKI: SYD UTD

Sterjovski, playing his first full season of Ericsson Cup, has been a major factor in Sydney United's sterling season.

He's formed a super-successful strike partnership with Joel Griffiths, the youngest and one of the best in the league.

Sterjovski had 14 goals to his credit after round 28 and may have had more were it not for Young



Carlton's Simon Colosimo ... one of a number in an open field for the U/21 award.

Socceroo duty in Nigeria.

Good in the air and on the floor, Sterjovski has made the transition from youth league to national league with ridiculous ease.

Last season, Sterjovski won the NYL Northern Division Player of the Year.

Don't be surprised to see him collect another award this time around.

Others to consider ... Simon Colosimo, Marco Bresciano, Christian Care, Zeljko Susa and Danny Milosevic.

Australian News

NSW NAMES POWERFUL SQUADS

The NSW Soccer Federation has named a strong squad to face Northern NSW on Monday April 26 in their ANZAC Cup clash. The game will be held at Jack McLaughlin Oval at 3pm and will be preceded by the ANZAC Shield Clash between NSW and Northern NSW Women at 1pm. The squad is as follows -

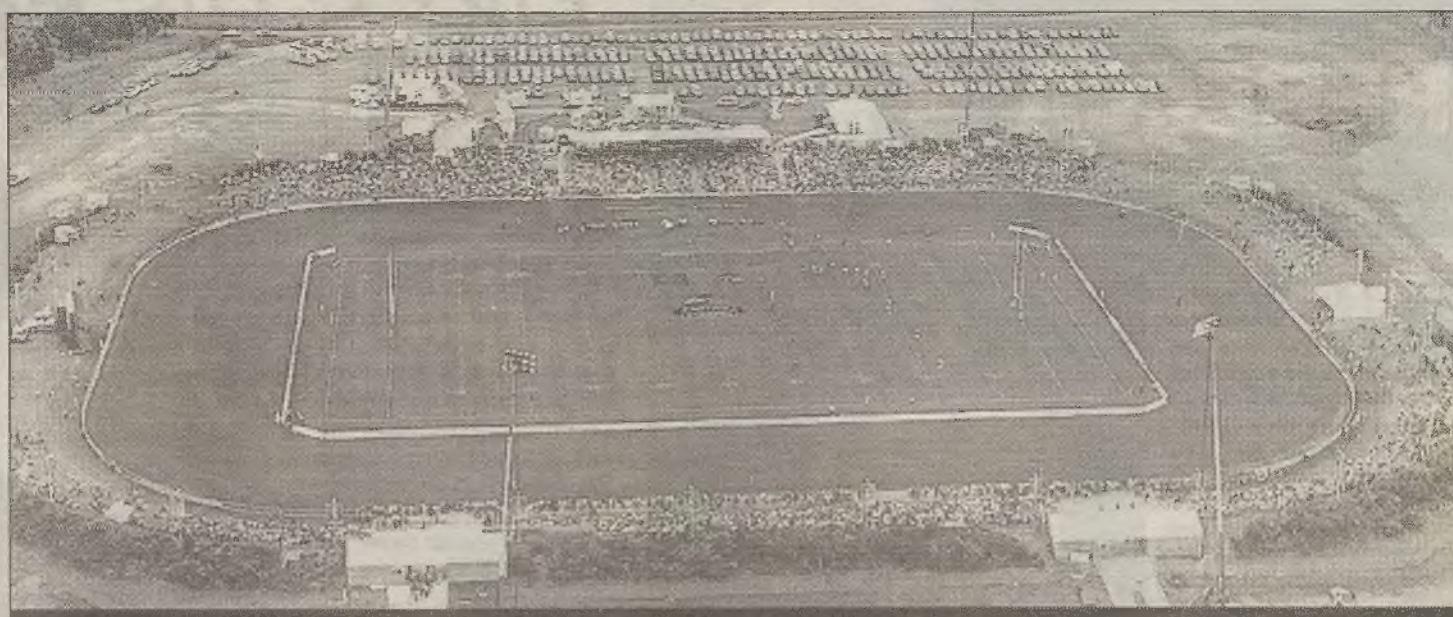
Alex Tropski	BANKSTOWN CITY LIONS
Richard Lukic	BANKSTOWN CITY LIONS
Borisлава Dragas	B/RIGG WHITE EAGLES
Paul Richardson	B/RIGG WHITE EAGLES
Robert Gomez	B/RIGG WHITE EAGLES
Peter Preston	CENTRAL COAST
Frank Mikuletic	LEICHARDT TIGERS
Tom Bazdaric	LEICHARDT TIGERS
Matthew Lowe	BLACKTOWN CITY LIONS
Jason Bennett	BLACKTOWN CITY LIONS
Jim Nikas	CANTERBURY-M'KVILLE
Matthew Borg	FAIRFIELD BULLS
John Crawley	MACARTHUR RAMS
Dion Valle	MACARTHUR RAMS
David Reid	MACARTHUR RAMS
Kain Rastall	MACARTHUR RAMS
Trevor Whiddett	MACARTHUR RAMS
Craig Sharpley	RYDE CITY
Coach	Doug Utjesenovic

The NSW Soccer Federation has named a select squad of First Division players to face the New Caledonian national team over the ANZAC weekend. The squad departs tomorrow (April 21) and returns on Monday April 25.

They will play two fixtures against the national team, on Friday April 23 and Sunday April 25. The squad is listed below:

Trinity Allen	(St George)
Danny Barbalace	(Manly Warringah Dolphins)
Matthew Baillie	(Bathurst '75)
Jerry Barros	(Dulwich Hill)
Matthew Bastian	(Manly Warringah Dolphins)
Nick Bolianitis	(Stanmore Hawks)
Bob Casserly	(Penrith Panthers)
Kelvin Foster	(Manly Warringah Dolphins)
Dean Harding	(Manly Warringah Dolphins)
Danny Hinton	(Penrith Panthers)
Peter Kypreos	(Stanmore Hawks)
Scott Mutton	(Bathurst '75)
Bill Petroski	(Rockdale City Suns)
Mark Cooke	(Bathurst '75)
Damian Rosenthal	(Manly Warringah Dolphins)
Simon Verrender	(St George)
Ben Wright	(Penrith Panthers)

MASTERS SOCCER IN COFFS



The magnificent International Sports Centre in beautiful Coffs Harbour. One of the venues for the Masters Games.

Holiday Coast Soccer invites you to be part of the 2000 NSW Masters Games, which are to be held from 12-18 July 2000 in Coffs Harbour, over thirty sports will take part in the event. The soccer competition will be a six-a-side format.

Whether your key motivation is the challenge of going for gold, or simply participating in the sport you love all in the name of good fun, the Games are for you!

Coffs Harbour is a major centre and holiday destination on the NSW North Coast with a population of 60,000.

Set in a magnificent subtropical environment featuring long stretches of uncluttered golden beaches, with a backdrop of lush rainforests, Coffs Harbour is the ideal setting for a fun week of "Masters" sport and social activities.

And when you need time out from the sport and social get-togethers there is no shortage of things to do and see ... visit an attraction, fossick for treasures at the weekend markets, be fascinated by the quality and diversity of local arts and crafts, or mix with the locals at one of the many entertainment venues.

How do you qualify to compete in the NSW



Masters Game?

If you are a male over 35 or female over 30, you qualify. There are no selection criteria and no qualifying process. Participants from interstate and indeed from overseas are most welcome to attend.

Where are the competitions going to be held?

Most events will take place in the city of Coffs Harbour, with most venues no more than five minutes drive from the centre of the city.

How much does it cost?

Competitors pay a registration fee (approximately \$40) and a sports fee for each sport competed in. The sports fee will vary from sport to sport.

How can I receive more information?

To register your interest in the Games, simply complete the Expression of Interest Form on this page and return it to the Games office. You will then be included on our regular mailing list.

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FORM

First Name: _____

(Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss) Surname: _____

Address: _____

State: _____ Postcode: _____

Age: _____ Ph: _____ H: _____ W: _____

Fax: _____

Six a Side Soccer Over 35 Men/Over 30 Women age groups
How many entry forms would you like mailed to you? _____

Team Name/s: _____

Past sporting achievements (optional). May be used for promotional purposes.

Please return by post or fax to:

2000 NSW Masters Games
PO BOX 263
COFFS HARBOUR NSW 2450
Telephone: 02 6658 5793
Fax: 02 6658 5914



NEXT WEEK

SOCCEROO

LEGEND

ALEX TOBIN

WITH
THE

FOUR DIEGOS



JAPANESE TRAIN AT PACIFIC UMBRO CAMP



In the past 12 months, well over 100 students have flown over to Sydney from Japan to attend the program. Pictured above is the Heizan High School.

Padstow Hornets Soccer Club

Under 12/1 Players

WANTED

2 vacancies with last years Bankstown District Under 11/1 Premiers

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Lou Allison ... 9772 3513

Training:
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Padstow

Australian Features

WITH
REBECCA



Great to be back. For this week's 'With Rebecca' is a player who has played a significant part in the rise of the Newcastle Breakers. Sure they did not make the finals, but they came damn close. And next year, with a little more money the sky is the limit. Would you please welcome Breakers midfielder Rob Shannon

1: Rob, firstly could you let the readers know a little about who you have played for in your career?

In Scotland at Dundee 82-91, Dunfermline 91-93, Motherwell 93-95, Dundee United 95-96, Hibernian 97, plus Middlesbrough on loan. At national level I have nine U/18 caps for Scotland, seven U/21 and one full international squad selection. Newcastle is my only Australian club.

2: It's been your first year here, what have been your overall impressions of the game here and in particular Newcastle.

I think Australian Soccer is very competitive considering it has many high profile sports to compete against. The climate dictates the pace of the game, but there are a lot of very good technical players around and, if marketed and sponsored, it could attract more people to participate at grass-roots level. Newcastle is one of the best potential soccer regions in Australia. Considering the lack of success and sponsorship, there is still a 4,000 average die-hard support base. The region would thrive on a successful club.

3: How did you end up at Newcastle?

First, I always wanted to come to Australia as I have family here who have always raved about it. I then sent resumes to clubs here stating my wish to pursue my career here. Chairman Bill Collins contacted me offering a position at Newcastle, but it wasn't until Lee Sterrey was appointed as head coach that things really developed.

4: Are there any players that have caught your eye this year, both at Newcastle and nationally?

Damien Mori has impressed me and there is a young kid at Brisbane but I am not sure of his name (*perhaps Kasey Wehrman?).

5: In a word describe the fans at Breakers stadium

Loyal

6: In a word describe coach Lee Sterrey

Approachable

7: In a word describe yourself



Breakers' former Scotland international, Rob Shannon.

Honest

8: On to you Rob, what sorts of things do you get up to outside of your football career?

I spend a lot of time with my family and just now we are trying to see as much of Australia as possible.

9: If you weren't a footballer, what would you be?

Perhaps in the computer industry.

10: Fav food, movie, drink and holiday destination?

Meat pies, VB, The Wizard of Oz, Majorca

11: Fav Scottish player,

world player?
Kenny Dalglish & Graeme Souness, Paul Gascoigne & Brian Laudrup

12: In ten years, where do you think you will be and what do you think you will be doing?

I hope to be in coaching after my playing days.

13: Complete this sentence

Love is

My wife and family.

Thanks Rob, you are one of the gentlemen of the game and congratulations on a great year with Lee Sterrey's Newcastle Breakers.

JUST A BLOKE WHO LIKES HIS FOOTBALL

By Craig Wilson

Billy Bragg, dressed in black, enters the Enmore Theatre with his manager, and immediately cracks a joke. He's adept at putting people at their ease, both musically and in person. I'm sitting in a long ante-room with an ornate Liberace style piano, decorated with as many curlicues as a wedding cake. "No photos next the piano" he quips, "I don't want to look like Cilla Black".

Bragg is anything but. His twenty year career began with Riff Raff, the rawest punk band in Barking, and continued through a series of electrified folk protest albums that made Bob Dylan sound like a grumpy Grand-dad.

Bragg himself has just become a father, something that informs his politics today like life on the dole did fifteen years ago. Bragg is touring to promote 'Mermaid Avenue', an album recorded with US band Wilco, and featuring songs written using the unpublished writings of the seminal American folkster and activist Woody Guthrie.

Bill's looking fighting fit, and is as personable as ever. This comes as something of a surprise. Bragg is asked about his politics at every interview, and this press conference is no different. Harold Wilson always said that socialism is what the Labour Party does"; he says, "I don't adhere to that. My socialism is based on fundamental humanitarian ideas". After all, and as old Harold was quick to remind people, England did win the World Cup under a Labour Govt.

It takes a while to get the political questions out of the way, and Bragg is very well informed about Australian politics.

He touches on the Wharfies strike, the rise of One Nation, republicanism, and the Nicky Winmar incident. Eventually I manage to bring up the not altogether unpolitical question of Rupert Murdoch and Manchester United. Bragg hasn't heard the result of the British government decision on the deal, and Soccer Weekly is the first to tell him. He is delighted.

"I'd be a dreadful cynic if I suggested that it had anything to do with the Sun newspaper [which Murdoch owns] coming out against the bombing of Serbia," he jokes. "Maybe this is a sign that the Labour government are finally standing up for ordinary people. I think it's really interesting. So far Tony Blair's agenda has been to support big business, so I was quite surprised that they came out against the deal. In opposition they did make some remarks about the prices of matches, and I think Blair is a genuine soccer fan, as are a lot of members of the cabinet."

"And I think they realise that a lot of people that voted for them go to soccer matches."

"It's very complicated. I think Man Utd will continually have to stave off buy-outs, particularly from broadcasters. The thing about United is that they are so successful. They are turning over so much money. Business people want the brand name. It's not even about the team".



Billy Bragg ... the West Ham fan is currently on tour in Australia with his band.

But is football still the people's game?

"No — generally it's a rich person's game".

Does he keep in touch with football while he's on tour? "There is a secret society of West Ham supporters, around the world, and I just check in to the local chapter," he smiles.

"No, I just look on the internet now. It used to be a real problem, particularly in America, but it's not that difficult any more. You can even get some of the games broadcast over the internet. It's made keeping in touch just that little bit easier."

Bragg is amused at the footage of Michael Jackson being introduced to the Fulham crowd before their game against Gillingham. "It was so strange. Craven Cottage is quite near where I live, and I recently went to the Cup game against Southampton.

"Al Fayed, the owner, did a lap of honour before the game. Which is a bit odd. You should really wait till afterwards."

So they won't be dragging you around Upton Park Bill? "No, I'm not that kind of celebrity. There's a whole footy media thing in Britain that I've

tried to steer clear of.

"I'm a bit too old for all this laddish stuff. Going on all these sports programmes and being identified with the literati soccer lads is not me. I was writing songs about football when it wasn't fashionable."

Although Mermaid Avenue has been nominated for a Grammy, Bragg is still the 'Big-nosed bastard from Barking' he always was, and football, music, and politics are still on the agenda. Another famous socialist, Bill Shankly, once said "The form of socialism I believe in is everyone working for each other, everyone having a share of the rewards. It's the way I see football, it's the way I see life".

I'm sure Billy Bragg would heartily concur.



Australian Features

The Year of Living Gloriously



"The players had a 'no worries' attitude. Now we are more professional." Bernd Stange.

Pics, including front, by SportsWest Media

By Aldan Ormond

Perth Glory has made the finals for the first time in its brief and meteoric career in the NSL. After coach Gary Marocchi laid the base in its first two seasons, German coach Bernd Stange came in at the start of the year and, in his charming way, set about changing just about everything at the club in order to achieve the holy grail: a finals appearance.

That has now happened. More significantly though, there has been a culture change. From the "no worries" mentality that has emerged a winning mentality, ushered in by the former East German national team, and Carl Zeiss Jena, boss, who has also coached in the Bundesliga.

During a break at the Glory junior soccer clinics, Stange, 50, went down to the WACA to have a look at the pitch Glory will play their finals on ("it's hard!"), and spoke about this season; a year of ups and downs at one of the real glamour clubs in

our league. And as you will read, he is not afraid to tell it like it is, including admitting mistakes, a refreshingly honest attitude in this day and age of endless coaches' excuses.

"For a club that has only been in the league three years, with no youth or reserve team, it is a great effort to make the finals," says Stange proudly.

"Not having these other teams at the club makes it very hard for me. We only have training training for the players. We cannot give the subs games in our other teams. The solution must be a budget for a youth and reserve game to play in WA next year."

"Because we are not the number one in sport, we are behind football and cricket, it is a great achievement reaching the finals. Having 200 kids at each of our clinics is another achievement also."

"In my first three months I tried to understand the Australian mentality and of course learn the language and the culture."

"That was most important," he stresses. "The mentality in Australian soccer is aggressive, while I am a technical coach, so

I was worried that the fans may not understand this when I want us to string ten or twenty passes together. I was worried that they may not enjoy this."

There was a lack of consistency, particularly during mid-summer. Can you pinpoint why?

"I think this year we went another way. We changed 12 players. We changed our training facilities and coaching staff. We also changed the mentality. The last two seasons Perth Glory had a poor home record (last year only three or four home wins). I could not believe it," he says incredulously. "Now we have changed that and our results have been good at home."

"I think we had a big chance to make the top two but I made a mistake," reflects Glory's coach.

"In January I did not change my training program and because it was so hot my play-

ers were flat and we lost to Newcastle and Wollongong at home."

"We were very flat. And of course we have to kick-off at 4pm which can be hard when it's so hot."

"Then I had a meeting with local AFL coach Mick Malthouse (West Coast Eagles), and he told me that it was wrong to do it that way. Plus with all the travelling by aircraft for our away games my players were too tired and this is why we will not finish in the top two."

"Next year my training during this period will be different, with more scientific facilities and I will reduce the training times. I am close to Mick Malthouse, who has helped me a lot. I can learn from the other sports, with their athletics and the preparation."

We all see Glory match days on TV, it looks very exciting. What is it like being out there on the pitch?

"The atmosphere is a result of the marketing at Glory. We have marketing professionals who have been able to attract to our ground 15,000 fans per game. There is plenty of entertainment, but also from my point of view, I want to go forward all the time. 'Attack, attack', that is what I tell my players. Fans like to see attacking football and entertaining play. We have scored 56 goals so far which is proof of this."

"This is my opinion on how we have to go in Australia. We have to play for the supporters, that is why I tell my players to go forward constantly. None of my players are in the top scorers' chart, but everyone gets on the scoresheet," he explains with much passion.

"I am not a 'total football' coach I am an attacking coach. I am a friendly man, I have a heart in my body but I am also very strict with my players."

"For example, Ernie Tapai, one of my best players here and a hero in Perth, was not able to follow my way. That is why he had to go," recalls Stange softly.

"When I arrived we had a 'no worries' approach, 'no worries coach if we let a goal in or we arrive late'. That gave me worries! Now we are more professional."

"Having said that we have only had eight or nine months, it is not long enough for me to build a strong team."

Speaking of impressive players, who have impressed you in the Ericsson Cup?

"I think Brad Maloney and the Petkovic brothers, and Lozanovski and Trimboli at South Melbourne are all impressive. That is why I cannot understand why we have not had more success with our national teams, like the U/20s in Nigeria," he laments.

Did you see any of the games from

the WYC99?

"I saw them all. I was very surprised with the Young Socceroos because we have great players. Colosimo, Culina, Emerton, Sterjovski, Griffiths, Grella and Bresciano. We went to Germany and Holland to prepare for a tournament played at 36 degrees! Why we had not been in Brunei or other such places?"

"And I cannot understand why we have not had steaks, the players were eating eggs and pasta? We should have our own steaks and cook with us, and all the things a national team needs," Stange notes in an exasperated tone.

"I cannot understand this. In 15 months we have the Olympics and we must start now with a squad of 40 players. There must be contact with the club coaches. I have not been contacted by Soccer Australia. We must have control for the players, with med-



Glory coaching braintrust, Bernd Stange (left) and assistant Mitch D'Avray.

icine and preparation. I will not speak too much about it because my job is here in Perth."

What have been the positives and negatives that have come out this year?

"From the positives comes Glory and Spirit which have the big marketing ideas and international flair," he explains.

"Unfortunately the negatives are that we are a mid-class soccer nation. You must look at results only, this is a negative for me because we have great players and coaches, but the results indicate we are a mid-class soccer nation."

Stange has a handshake agreement with dynamic Glory chairman Nick Tana to coach next year, and he has fulfilled the wish of his employer to reach the finals in his first season.

Together with his assistant Mitch D'Avray (ex-Ipswich Town), Stange has brought about a revolution at the club. Yet he really needs more time to bring about the ultimate prize ... a West Australian club holding aloft the trophy as national champions, but he has achieved the first goal.

Perth Glory, the first NSL winners of the new millennium? What a way to start the new century for Australian Club Soccer.



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FACTFILE: BERND WALTER STANGE COACH LICENSE: A

CLUBS: Carl Zeiss Jena 72-78, 88-90, Hertha 90-92, Leipzig 92-94, FC Dnipro (Ukraine) 94-96

NATIONAL: GDR U/21, Assistant National Coach GDR, Head Coach Olympics GDR in Los Angeles, Head Coach GDR National Team 83-88 (53 Internationals), including coaching against England at Wembley on 22 Sep 1984.

*Was also Special Envoy of the German Football Fed for GIS states.

Australian Features



Have you ever wondered what it would be like to be Posh Spice and wake up to the pleasurable sound of David Beckham snoring in tune to "Viva Forever"? Or be able to listen to Fabio Cannavaro belch at the dinner table and be able to proudly say "that's my man"? Well us at Soccer Spice HQ have! We thought we would dig into the domestic lives of certain soccer players and find out what it's like to be the "better half" — after all you can tell a man by his woman!



Okay, so the guys whose lives we're prying into may not be as internationally renowned as Mr Beckham and Mr Cannavaro but we think they're just as important ...

The ladies BEHIND OUR ERICSSON CUP STARS

Twenty-three year old Denise Benetis met her husband UTS Olympic captain Peter Tsekenis (or 'BABE' as he prefers to be called - la la la!) whilst playing in a soccer tournament in Melbourne. A New South Wales and Australian representative herself, Denise has been with Peter since the age of 15 when she was dazzled by his boyish charm (yes that's right - it was a severe case of 80s boofy hairstyles that bought these two together), as well as his defensive abilities on the soccer pitch.

Her skills as a top striker for women's soccer in her youth seems to have rubbed off onto Peter who has recently found form in front of goal and has managed to score a couple for Olympic.

The 'striking' Mrs Tsekenis did show a preference to her other half attacking a little more, ' Is he would go more forward so can score. There's nothing like reliving the feeling I experienced having my

boyfriend score at the Olympics. Even though it's only the NSL I still feel very proud of him and let everyone know that my babe scored.'

When asked if they have ever experienced problems because of Peter's soccer commitments, Denise was quick to say that the world game has never come between them. "We both share a common interest: a love for soccer. Just like Peter I grew up playing and following soccer so I've grown to love the sport. Peter and I often find ourselves staying up together watching soccer matches. The only disadvantage would be the amount of soccer gear I have to wash — he won't leave the house unless his boots have been perfectly cleaned and polished!"

Like most players, Tseka also has his pre-match habits — no ladies he doesn't have a lucky pair of underwear or a special jockstrap, his only demand is his meal of chicken and spaghetti on the table at 2pm sharp every Sunday (and I mean sharp).

Rebecca Khair who met the striking number seven from Sydney Olympic, Norman Tome (pictured at top of page), while partying at city nightclub CBD, also has no regrets about her relationship with the talented forward.

Despite not have any initial interest in soccer, Rebecca and 'Normando' (with a spicy Spanish accent mind you), have been able to maintain a very steady and exciting relationship ever since Norman 'stormed' into her life three years ago (with a pet name like that who wouldn't. Aaaaaaargh!).

Rebecca's disinterest in soccer (and most sports), has never been a problem with the man who psyches himself up by listening to heavy metal music before a match (now that's a sure fire way to focus! Hmmm). "Norman doesn't need to talk about soccer 24/7. He likes to switch off. Soccer doesn't really come up in our conversations."

When asked about the advantages and disadvantages of going out with a soccer player, Rebecca sees positives "Well, the good thing is you get to switch on the TV set and see your boyfriend playing. It's so nice to see your partner succeed. The only disadvantage would be seeing him get injured." Rebecca also mentioned the away factor as being somewhat of a low point, "When he is away for extended periods I do tend to miss him — his cool personality, nice looks, and body which attracted me to him."

Club Marconi was the meeting point for Melissa Muscat and her man of one and a half years, Northern Spirit's funny guy, Tony Perinich.

Melissa, a fellow soccer weekly reporter,

provided us with the dirt on life with a soccer player boyfriend (although it seems her experience has been thoroughly cleaned with cold power as all is clean and bright!).

Sharing many of the views of Denise and Rebecca, Melissa finds it hard at times to cope with Tony's demanding career, "You have no social life and it's hard to plan ahead as he's going interstate every

Being somewhat of a soccer freak herself, Melissa understands that soccer for Tony exists on a level of its own, "His first love is soccer — it's his main priority, his life. He is always in a good mood before a game because he just loves to play".

And when asked about possible post-match mood swings caused by a harsh defeat, Melissa claims Mr Perinich does not experience such things, "He's a very good sport, he'll never take out a loss on me. He just turns everything into a joke. Like everyone though he does like to win, but he takes the good with the bad".

We did however, hear a cat squealing in a bag nearby when there was a mention of Scrabble in the conversation. As it turns out, Tony Perinich, is quiet a "spirited" scrabble player, and he may joke about losing a soccer match but when it comes to the mind boggling, heart racing, palm sweating game of scrabble, it's no more Mr Nice Guy.

"He doesn't like losing to me in scrabble. He hates it," Melissa laughs. Uh huh, so Mr Perinich does have a flaw after all!

So, some advice from those in the know, for the females of the homosapiens species who fantasize about pursuing a career as a soccer player's girlfriend/wife/professional boot cleaner/sock washer — be



Peter 'Babe' Tsekenis with his soccer-playing wife Denise

second week, so it gets pretty hard and he won't go out the night before a match".

She does however, thrive on the positives, "It's very rewarding when you see him win man of the match or score a goal ... it's the ultimate."

prepared to sacrifice your social life.

Pack away your club gear, as you won't be needing it this Saturday ... or the next ... or the one after that.

Dear Soccer Spice ...

Dear Soccer Spice,

My fiance of 2 years is an absolute soccer nut. All he does is live, breathe and eat soccer. I am unable to plan anything for our weekends let alone our wedding, we're suppose to be getting married in 8 months.

All he wants to do is go to the soccer or watch it on TV. He talks soccer in his sleep. I really love this man but soccer is taking over our relationship. I'm sick of being second best to a game. I feel neglected and alone. Please help.

Neglected Girlfriend

Dear Neglected Girlfriend,

Why don't you get involved in soccer? Go to the games and you might be able to find someone else who appreciates you more. There is plenty of talent on the field and in the grandstand.

Dear Soccer Spice,

I like this girl I see at the soccer every weekend. The only problem is, I'm on the field playing and she's watching. Sometimes I can't keep my mind on the game and miss crosses from my team mates. How do I let her know that I like her with out

making a total idiot of myself?

Dreamy Defender

Dear Dreamy Defender,

Point the girl out to one of your mates on the sideline and get them to do your dirty work. Ask them to invite her to a victory party after the match, that is of course you win the game. But make sure your mate is not that good looking otherwise she might fancy him. Good luck.

Dear Soccer Spice,

My 7 year old son won't take his soccer boots off. He wears them in the bath, to school and even to bed. I have tried everything from bribes to shouting. He doesn't even play soccer, but insists on wearing the boots all the time. This has been going on for 2 weeks.

Booted Boy's Mum

Dear Booted Boy's Mum,

Let your little darling play a game of soccer and his little feet will be so sore that he will be begging you to take the boots off his feet.

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Australian Features



The Four Diegos continue their VW Combi Van tour by dropping in on Trabzonspor Olyroo ...
Tansel Baser



Diegos: "Tranquill Albert Park lake and the Bob Jane Stadium is a world away from the throbbing, seething, pulsating cauldron of Turkish footy. How have you adjusted to life in Turkey and would you recommend it as an ideal stepping-stone for a young Aussie kid who is trying to crack it in Europe?"

Baser: "I think it is a great stepping stone. I always wanted to make a career out of the game and I've come to a league that is well known worldwide."

"Teams like Galatasaray and Fenerbache are big clubs and well known. The idea, if I'm fortunate, is to establish myself in Turkey and then move on to a bigger club on the continent."

Diegos: "A tradition in Turkey with some clubs is to slaughter a sheep on the ground before the game and smear the blood on the forehead of the players to inspire them to great feats. Have you been smeared with sheep's blood yet, and after a poor performance has the crowd ever considered substituting the

RIFLES, SHEEP'S BLOOD, BELLY DANCERS! TANSEL'S TALE

sheep with the coach to guarantee victory?"

Baser: "You wouldn't believe that that actually occurred three weeks ago. They get the blood and they wipe it on your forehead as a sign of luck and good fortune. I personally prefer to keep away from those types of initiations. The sight of anyone's blood, in particular sheep's blood, makes me squirm. They went through the ritual just prior to the team boarding a flight that was going to take us to the big derby against Fenerbache."

Diegos: "There is something about slaughtering a sheep on the tarmac of a Turkish airport that doesn't conjure up

Diegos: "The South Melbourne boys are renowned not only for their exploits on the field of play, but also on the

played them recently and lost 1-0.

"The crowd was unbelievable. There was 40,000 people just screaming their heads off. You couldn't hear yourself think out on the ground. The atmosphere was electric. We play another big rival, Galatasaray in a couple of weeks at home, so that should be huge."

Diegos: "It's well documented that fanatical Turkish football supporters often celebrate their team's win by firing live rounds of ammunition into the air."

"As a player, does that make you nervous and what is it like to have duck season 12 months of the year?"

Baser: "This is another trait common to Turkish soccer. It's unbelievable at times over here. Two or three years ago Trabzonspor lost the championship in the last round of the regular season and the supporters of the winning team were celebrating by shooting bullets into the air.

"Unfortunately a few stray bullets injured some people. So as you can see they do take their soccer pretty seriously. I guess you can say that it's a kind of duck season all year round."

Diegos: "Thanks Tansel. We hope that one day your coach will allow you

The Four Diegos' are radio celebrities and soccer scribes on Melbourne's Stereo 97.4 FM Saturday 10 am-12 midday.

E-Mail 'The Diegos' on FourDiegos@bigpond.com

Until next time ... Adios Amigos!

to impress those Turkish belly dancers with your Aussie twang. Adios amigo!"

Baser: "Thanks Diegos. As long as I avoid that sheep's blood I'll be a happy man. Adios amigos!"

Baser in action in the Ericsson Cup with South Melbourne against the Knights.

great visions pre-match preparation?"

Baser: "Yeh, it's a little different to what Ange Postecoglou used to do at South Melbourne that's for sure."

Diegos: "Although regarded as a fully fledged bonza Aussie, you are also a product of Turkish descent. Has speaking the language made things easier on the pitch and does the Aussie twang to your Turkish, make you more attractive to the local girls?"

Baser: "I've got no trouble with the accent but I can't say too much about the local girls. My coach is English so I don't have any problems following instructions on the pitch. I've actually, at times, acted as an interpreter for the coach and some of the players."

Diegos: "You are an integral member of the Olyroos. With the Olympic Games in Sydney 18 months away will your club allow you to return to Australia to prepare adequately for the competition?"

Baser: "I've already talked to my club and they've said that there will not be any problems with that. They know that there will be a lot of preparation for the Olympics in 2000 and have assured me that they will allow me to return whenever I'm needed because they recognise how important it is."

dance floors of all the best night clubs in Melbourne. You especially have been known to enjoy a pelvic thrust under the revolving silver ball at times. What is the nightlife like in Turkey and has Kylie Minogue hit number one in the Turkish disco charts yet?"

Baser: "There are no nightclubs out here. I just go to cafes in my spare time. We live a professional life and don't get the opportunity to enjoy any such nightlife. Unfortunately, we can't do anything on the scale of what we used to get up to with the boys at South Melbourne. As far as Kylie Minogue is

concerned she has to take a back seat to the Turkish belly dancers."

Diegos: "Liverpool v. Everton, Inter Milan v. A.C. Milan, and Rangers v. Celtic are regarded as some of the biggest most intense football derbies in the world. Which club is Trabzonspor's big rival and have you tasted the intensity of a Turkish derby yet?"

Baser: "Our biggest rival is Fenerbache. We



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Tansel Baser ... has been messing about with sheep's blood.

SOCER WOMAN

WITH JANENE MAR IN CANBERRA

THE YEAR OF JULIE MURRAY ... MAGIC MATILDA SCOOPS AWARDS

NSWIS Sapphire and Matilda Julie Murray was honoured as Australia's number one domestic and international player in taking out both the Julie Dolan Medal and the International Player of the Year award last Saturday night.

The occasion was the Ansett Summer Series Awards Night Fundraiser, the second national league awards ceremony. This year's memorable event was held in the plush Rydges Wentworth Hotel in the heart of the Sydney CBD, women's soccer's first ever black-tie affair which was enthusiastically enjoyed by the 90-strong paying audience.

Proceeds from the evening will go towards the Australian Under 21 Team's tour to Iceland this August for the prestigious Nordic Cup. A lighthearted game of 'Irish bingo' was followed by an auction of framed autographed shirts, a magazine signed by Diego Maradona, and an Ansett and Hilton Hotel holiday.

Emerging as the winners from some serious bidding were the generous Tony Labozetta, Sarah Groube, Jodie Camden, and Margaret Fulham, between them contributing a much-appreciated \$6,000.

Votes towards the Julie Dolan medal for the national league Player of the Year were made after each match by the national coaches, the referee, and a media representative. Again these votes were revealed at the awards night after three stages of the 10-round season, the audience eagerly awaiting the movement and allocation of points throughout.

The Highest Goalscorer in national league was again recognised, and another new award introduced was the Best First Year Player, awarded to the Ansett Summer Series top player to have made their starting eleven debut during the 1998/99 season.

Julie Murray was consistently commanding in her central midfield role for the NSWIS Sapphires, displaying her immaculate touch, skill on the ball, vision and distribution in launching attacking situations.

Murray led at each stage as votes were revealed after the Round 3, Round 6 and Round 10 stages, each time just ahead of Canberra's Lisa Casagrande.

Whilst instrumental in creating vital scoring opportunities for her teammates, Murray herself notched up four goals, including one fantastic hat-trick.



The Year of the Murray ... our brilliant striker has been awarded our highest honour for a player.

BEST FIRST YEAR PLAYER

MICHELLE CARNEY NSWIS SAPPHIRES

Michelle Carney performed solidly throughout her debut national league season, a diminutive forward who is not a prolific scorer but shows intelligence in her running off the ball and supports her teammates well.

A defender's nightmare and never-say-die worker who doesn't stop running and will often steal the ball off the opposition.

The 16-year-old Carney has made a successful transition from last year's NSW Youth Team to the national league and has been named as a contender for a berth in this year's Nordic Cup Team. Carney polled a credible 13 points in the player of the year votes.

BEST INTERNATIONAL PLAYER

JULIE MURRAY

Julie Murray has proved to be Australia's best for year 1998/99 in whatever arena she is competing. The remarkable thing is that she is able to switch positions at will, now playing as a forward for the Matildas and enjoying the new challenge.

The 1998/99 year included the Tour to North Korea where Murray scored the only goal to win the series for Australia, the vital Oceania World Cup Qualifiers when Murray scored a stunning goal inside the opening two minutes of the final to set up Australia's place in the World Cup. Murray also performed solidly during the Australia Cup and the recent Algarve Cup. Murray's international year was capped off with selection in the first ever FIFA Women's All-Star Team which defeated the USA in February. Murray also reached her 50th cap in the World Cup Qualifiers final.

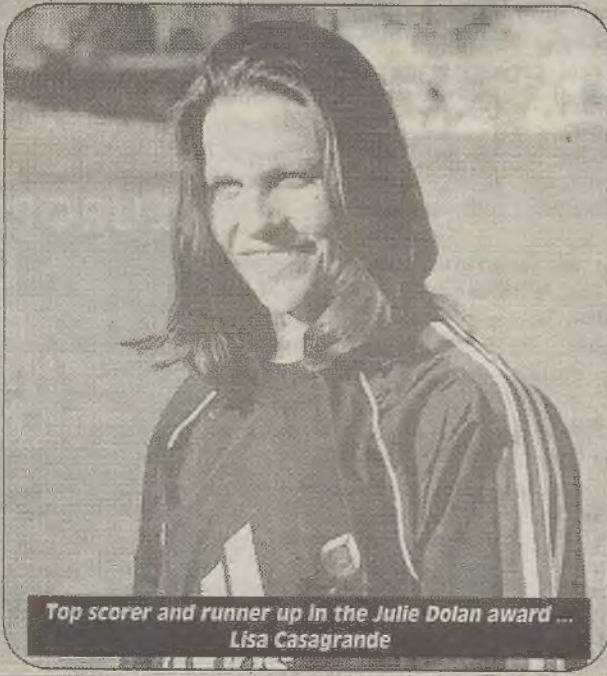
CASAGRANDE TOP SCORER

The recipient of this award was certainly no secret, the record-breaking goalscoring efforts of Canberra Eclipse's Lisa Casagrande well known to all.

The agile speedster with great ball skills and lethal shot racked up an unbelievable four hat-tricks from the sixteen game season for a total of sixteen goals.

Her tally blitzed the opposition, almost doubling the number of goals of the second top scorer - QAS Sting's Lisa Dunne with 9 goals.

Congratulations from Soccer Weekly to one of our most popular players.



*Top scorer and runner up in the Julie Dolan award ...
Lisa Casagrande*

Julie Dolan award final placings

WINNER JULIE MURRAY

NSWIS SAPPHIRES 54 PTS

- | | |
|------|--|
| 2nd | Lisa Casagrande Canberra Eclipse 46 pts |
| 3rd | Lisa Dunne QAS Sting 40 pts |
| 4th | Cheryl Salisbury NNSW Horizon 36 pts |
| 5th | Sharon Black SASI Pirates 31 pts |
| 6th | Kelly Golebiowski NSWIS Sapphires 28 pts |
| 6th | Louisa Bisby SASI Pirates 28 pts |
| 8th | Traci Bartlett Canberra Eclipse 27 pts |
| 9th | Angela Iannotta Canberra Eclipse 21 pts |
| 9th | Dianne Alagich SASI Pirates 21 pts |
| 11th | P.C. Hepperlin Canberra Eclipse 20 pts |
| 12th | Natalie Thomas SASI Pirates 18 pts |



*Lisa Dunne ... third place in
the voting.*

SUMMER IS... ERICSSON CUP

NEXT ROUND

Saturday 24 April

Canberra v Gippsland

Bruce Stadium

Sunday 25 April

Wollongong v Perth

Brandon Park

Adelaide City v Sydney Olympic

Hindmarsh Stadium

Marconi v Northern Spirit

Marconi Stadium

Brisbane v Newcastle

Suncorp Stadium

Sydney United v Adelaide Sharks

Edensor Park

Melbourne Knights v Carlton SC

Knight Stadium

Bye: South Melbourne

Please note, these fixtures are supplied by Soccer Australia, and are correct at time of printing. Please check local guides in case of changes. We accept no responsibility for any late changes to fixtures, or incorrect information supplied to us.

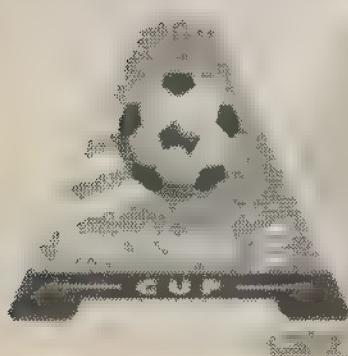
RESULTS ROUND 29

Newcastle Breakers	1
Northern Spirit	1
Marconi Fairfield	1
Adelaide City	0
South Melbourne	1
Canberra Cosmos	0
Gippsland Falcons	0
Sydney United	0
Adelaide Sharks	1
Brisbane Strikers	2
Sydney Olympic	2
Wollongong Wolves	2
Perth Glory	3
Melbourne Knights	1

Bye Carlton SC

ERICSSON CUP TABLE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
South Melbourne	28	17	6	5	50	26	57
Sydney United	27	17	4	6	50	32	55
Perth Glory	27	16	4	7	59	34	52
Northern Spirit	27	14	4	9	36	34	46
Marconi Fairfield	27	14	3	10	52	47	45
Sydney Olympic	27	12	7	8	48	35	43
Adelaide City	27	12	6	9	38	26	42
Brisbane Strikers	27	11	6	10	40	45	39
Newcastle Breakers	27	10	7	10	27	32	37
Carlton SC	27	9	4	14	46	45	31
Wollongong Wolves	27	8	7	12	42	49	31
Adelaide Sharks	27	7	6	14	35	43	27
Melbourne Knights	27	7	5	15	30	42	26
Gippsland Falcons	27	5	9	13	17	44	24
Canberra Cosmos	27	4	2	21	21	55	14





ERICSSON CUP

WEEK 29
15-18 APRIL
1995

BREAKERS SHOW THEY CAN MATCH IT

NEWCASTLE	1
Haythornthwaite 61	
NORTHERN SPIRIT	1
Blokapic 59	

At Breakers Stadium, Newcastle

By John Economos

Newcastle Breakers last Friday night gallantly battled on to hold Northern Spirit to a hard fought 1-1 draw on a heavy track at the Breakers Stadium before their season's second biggest crowd of 5,015.

The luckless Breakers broke the hearts of their valiant vocal supporters with a hat-trick of misfortunes

First, and five minutes from the break, the Breakers' dynamic little striker Johnny Buonavoglia screamed on to a Fouad Umlil through-ball and into the clear on the right. But the pint-sized attacker hit the right upright as the ball deflected square and across the goalmouth and finally out on the far side.

Secondly, in the 53rd minute following a free kick, Newcastle's industrious midfielder Tom Haythornthwaite with his back to the target, hurled himself into midair to smash a goal-bound scissors kick, however the ball cannoned off the right post and glanced into the grateful gloves of the Spirit goalie Paul Henderson.

With all three Newcastle subs already on, in the 77th minute substitute striker Chris Tancheski was stretchered off the pitch with a suspected broken left shoulder having heavily collided with Spirit's steely midfielder Paul Blokapic. Newcastle was left to fight on for the remaining 13 minutes a man short.

If all this was not enough, following a Kresimir Marusic corner in the 59th minute, referee Matthew Breeze awarded Spirit a soft and controversial penalty after the ball had deflected off a player and then struck Newcastle's substitute Glenn Sprod on the arm.

Unfortunately this was Sprod's first touch of the ball having just 60 seconds prior replaced defender Andy Roberts. Right on fulltime Breeze was loudly jeered off

the pitch for this decision.

Blokapic, who got through a ton of work in the midfield for the Spirit with his fiery tackling, made no mistake from the spot to make it 1-1.

Now being a goal down, the Breakers became a completely different side as they launched raid after raid. The Breakers were finally rewarded for their efforts in the 67th minute when the previously luckless Haythornthwaite, from the back post, headed into the target a Robbie Shannon cross curled from the right.

Five minutes later a fabulously struck low free kick by the Breakers' captain Shane Pryce, zeroed for the target through the defensive wall. But an equally fabulous block was pulled off by Henderson.

Spirit's 22 year old keeper vividly displayed just how much he's grown in confidence this season. Twice, (once in each half), he aggressively raced out through his crowded box to the very edge to climb and take both crosses cleanly.

The Spirit had come to Newcastle determined to cement at least a single point that would nail down their spot in the end of season top six.

Spirit striker Clayton Zane almost drew first blood as early as the third minute. Zane scooped onto a ball deep in the Breakers' box, but a fully stretched Bobby Catlin brilliantly turned the missile for a corner.

The 13th minute proved unlucky for Newcastle midfielder Mark Wilson as he blasted on the turn but wide of the target an Andy Roberts ball in from the left.

On the half hour mark the powerful Zane took on the Newcastle defence and from the edge of the box slammed an on target rising rocket which Catlin easily gathered into his gloves.

The Breakers in the last 15 minutes and desperately seeking to hit the winner, bombarded the Spirit's lines with monotonous regularity. But the Sydney defence hugely inspired by the uncompromising sweeper and coach Graham Arnold plus Blokapic, defiantly tackled everything in sight to keep the scoreboard static till fulltime.

Outstanding for Newcastle were midfielder Adam Sanderson, Pryce, Catlin, Haythornthwaite, Buonavoglia and Umlil, whilst for Spirit, Arnold, Blokapic, Henderson and Zane excelled.



Andy Roberts came into the box of the week's best players, scored against the Breakers. Pic by Barry Fallon

The Breakers boss Lee Sterrey later lamented: "I was happy with the quality of display from us but disappointed with Johnny's (Buonavoglia) first half chance. I wanted them (Spirit) to have the ball in the first 20 minutes, but we went down a goal out of nothing. I'm not complaining about the penalty as Breeze (the referee) is a pretty honest type of guy and calls it as he sees it."

"We showed character and wore our hearts on our sleeves. It was unfortunate we lost Tancheski with a suspected broken left shoulder. In previous seasons Newcastle would concede two and a half goals every game, but this season we were down to conceding one

MATCH STATS...

Crowd: 5,015

Referee: M. Breeze

NEWCASTLE BREAKERS: Catlin; Shannon, McManus, Pryce, Roberts (Sprod 68th), Wilson, Umlil (Yoon 75th), (Haythornthwaite, Sanderson, Wieczorek (Tancheski 65th), Buonavoglia.

NORTHERN SPIRIT: Henderson; Rudan, Arnold, Moss, Cassidy, Blokapic, Binglaj; Zane, Marusic (Cunico 82nd), Slater (Watkins 38th-Mendez 89th).

Yellows:
Northern Spirit: Crook, Marusic

Players Votes of the Year:
3: Arnold (NS)
2: Sanderson (Newcastle)
1: Pryce (Newcastle)

and a half per match.

"I congratulate Arnie on getting Spirit in their first season into the top six which was always going to be very hard for a brand new team," added Sterrey.

Meanwhile Arnold reflected: "I would like to first apologise for the way we played as we came here to do a job and get a point, and for once this season we didn't throw men forward. Newcastle is a quality defending side that breaks well and Lee (Sterrey) has done a fantastic job up here. I did everything to get that League point we needed (for top six). I took Slater off early as he sustained a 'cork' and was already running around with six yellow cards.

"We have big match players and thus I'm looking forward to the semis. Now 1 can go to Marconi this weekend, relaxed a bit, and not under pressure. It's good for Australian Soccer we have made it to the semis in our first season," Arnold ended.

Last night (Monday night) Newcastle held a cross-training session with local NRL side Newcastle Knights.

COSMOS GATECRASHES SOUTH PARTY

SOUTH MELBOURNE	1
De Amicis 1	
CANBERRA COSMOS	0

At Bob Jane Stadium, Melbourne

By Dwight Tuffnell

South Melbourne celebrated their 40th anniversary by sewing up a spot in the top two, ensuring the double chance in the finals with a 1-0 victory over Canberra Cosmos on Sunday.

It wasn't win that would have inspired much confidence though, South struggled for much of the match and the team from the capital were unlucky not to leave without at least a point.

A Nick Orlic goal, after 71 minutes, gave South the points when it looked as though the Cosmos may hang on for a draw or even sneak an unlikely win.

"I knew they'd make it tough for us" said coach Ange Postecoglou after the game. "They've been one of the better sides out of the top six in the second half of the season."

"Canberra played well and worked very hard. In the second half they came at us and created a few opportunities."

"We needed an early goal to open them up, we had the chances that we didn't take. After that, it was always going to be tough and it took a good goal by Nick Orlic to win it."

It appeared in the early stages that Cosmos 'keeper Wilson Knezevic was going to be a busy boy.

Michael Curcija tested him in the fourth minute when

Paul Trimboli cut the ball back for him following Fausto De Amicis ball down the line.

Any flood of goals that the South Melbourne fans expected didn't come as the Cosmos more than held their own, repelling most of South's attacks and produced a couple of decent ones themselves.

Curcija had another shot just before half time when played in by Goran Lozanovski but, with just Knezevic to beat, he rolled the ball just wide of the post.

After a door first half, the visitors had the first chance of the second.

Anthony Magnacca, reportedly a transfer target for South and off for trials with Bolton Wanderers shortly, forced Petkovic into conceding a corner in the 52nd minute.

Just a minute later South had their best chance of the match thus far. Steve Panopoulos teed up Vaughan Coveny but the sides top scorer shot straight at Knezevic.

Peter Buljan's shot that was saved by Petkovic started a period of domination by the Cosmos that brought them the opportunity to score at least one goal.

Firstly, in the 60th minute, Buljan crossed into the centre where Gabriel Gonzalez, in plenty of space, volleyed over the bar.

A minute later, they squandered the chance of the game.



Crowd: 8,864

Referee: Gerry Connolly

South Melbourne: Petkovic, Iosifidis, De Amicis, Orlic, Blatsis, Clarkson, Panopoulos (Goutzioulis 59), Coveny, Trimboli (Tsekinis 80), Curcija (Anastasiadis 67), Lozanovski.

Canberra Cosmos: Knezevic, Burt, Wilson, Zelic, Marcina, Magnacca (De Jesus 75), Buljan, Miglietti, Musitano (Purdue 85), Roberts, Gonzalez (Langone 80).

Yellow Cards.

South Melbourne: Coveny (16), Blatsis (32) Canberra Cosmos: Wilson (15), Burt (90)

Votes for Player of the Year

3: Orlic (SM)
2: Magnacca (CC)
1: Gonzalez (CC)

another week while the other finals go on.

This, says Postecoglou, will give them time to get players right and the chance to have a couple of friendly games.

"First spot is out of our hands now which is a bit disappointing" said Postecoglou. "It's what we set out to do."

Postecoglou, a veteran of finals series as both coach and player, said that South know what they have to do.

"Finals football is all about facing whatever is out there and adjusting to it."

"We're going to go out there playing our game and regardless of the way the opposition is playing, we won't change" concluded Postecoglou.



ERICSSON CUP

WEEK 29
16-18 APRIL
1999

OLYMPIC BLOWS GOLDEN CHANCE

SYDNEY OLYMPIC

Cardozo 46, OG 72

WOLLONGONG WOLVES

Surjan 55, Masi 57

At Belmore Sports Ground, Sydney

By Ben Cubby

Sydney Olympic was held to a two-all draw by the resiliant Wollongong Wolves at Belmore Oval on Sunday evening. The result means Olympic must now seek at least a draw away to Adelaide City in the last round of the regular season to earn a place in the finals.

The home team had the better of a scoreless first half, dominating possession but rarely threatening the Wolves goal.

The first real chance of the game fell to Wollongong after 24 minutes, when Scott Chipperfield's angled shot was deflected over the bar. A minute later, a low cross from Olympic forward Chris Kalantzis was tapped just wide of the post by Jason Culina.

Wollongong absorbed plenty of pressure in opening half, with 'keeper Daniel Beltrame in commanding form at the back. Young defender Paul Dimech, making his first start at senior level, miskicked dangerously across the face of goal in the 35th minute, but otherwise produced a solid performance.

The match came alive after half-time, when Pablo

Cardozo opened the score for Olympic in the 47th minute. Kalantzis floated in an accurate cross from the left and the league's leading scorer turned and smashed a powerful volley past Beltrame from the edge of the box.

Straightaway the Wolves began to push forward in search of a goal. Olympic 'keeper George Bouhoustos got down well at the near post to block a powerful shot from half-time substitute Esala Masi in the 54th minute. Moments later, Tony Surjan equalised for Wollongong from a goalmouth scramble, after Milan Blagojevic had stopped a Masi shot on the line.

Three minutes later, Masi had the Wolves in front. A long clearance by Beltrame caught Olympic short at the back, and the big Fijian surged forward to meet a neat through ball from Paul Reid, before chipping calmly over the advancing Bouhoustos.

Sydney coach Branko Culina sent teenager Nick Carle into the fray as Olympic laid siege to the Wollongong goalmouth. Ante Juric's 25 metre shot was tipped away brilliantly by Beltrame in the 70th minute,



Scott Chipperfield ... the talented Socceroo was a constant menace.

and Cardozo curled a freekick over the bar shortly afterwards.

The pressure told after 74 minutes, when Wolves sweeper Robbie Stanton headed a Kalantzis cross into the net for an own goal. With the score level at two-apiece, Olympic sensed a possible victory and continued to push forward. Daniel Beltrame saved a Peter Tsekens header from point blank range and immediately produced another dazzling effort to deny Mehmet Durakovic.

The match became an enthralling, end to end contest as both sides went after a winner.

Tony Surjan came close with a dipping shot in the 82nd minute, but Bouhoustos leapt high to pull off a one-handed save. The Olympic 'keeper rescued his team again seconds later, blocking at the near post after a weaving run and shot by Scott Chipperfield.

Norm Tome came on for the home side with five minutes remaining and headed a Cardozo corner just over the bar. Wollongong broke quickly from defence, and the home crowd held their breaths as Ray Younis sent his shot inches wide of the post with Bouhoustos beaten.

Deep into injury time, Beltrame again distinguished himself with a flying save to deflect Tome's goalbound header to safety.

After the match, Wollongong coach Nick

MATCH STATS...

Crowd: 4,360

Referee: Brett Hugo

Sydney Olympic: Bouhoustos, Thomas Tsekens, Culina (Brennan 95th), Cardozo, Emerton, Kalantzis (Tome 85th), Juric, Baile (Carle 61st), Durakovic, Blagojevic.

Wollongong Wolves: Beltrame, Souris, Dimech, Stanton, Horsley, Surjan, Dimoski (Brooks 61st), Chipperfield, Younis, Petrovski (Masi 45th, Quenett 85th), Reid.

Yellows:
Wollongong, Reid, Dimoski, Surjan, Sydney Olympic, Blagojevic, Thomas, Carle

Votes for Player of the Year:

- 3: Chipperfield (WW)
- 2: Blagojevic (SO)
- 1: Beltrame (WW)

Theodorakopoulos stated "this was a quality game from two good sides". With his team out of finals contention, he said "the boys wanted to prove a point, and when you look at our results against the top sides, then they have done so".

Sydney Olympic boss Branko Culina called the draw a "pleasing result". He said "I'm proud of the boys, they showed a lot of character. We've showed that we can bounce back. Wollongong were under no pressure".

He felt that Olympic can play their way into the finals series, but "we still need the result against Adelaide City next week".

GLORY END ON A HIGH AT PERTH OVAL

PERTH GLORY

Edwards 17, Despotovski 34, Circati 52

MELBOURNE KNIGHTS

Reida 10

At Perth Oval, Perth

By Richard Kreider

There were mixed emotions after Perth Glory beat the Melbourne Knights last Sunday. The elation of the 3-1 win, a result that kept Glory in with an outside chance of finishing second on the Ericsson Cup ladder, was largely overshadowed by the ending of a three season fairytale story at Perth Oval.

The Western Australian club was unable to extend their stay because the NSL summer season overlaps the beginning of the winter season of Aussie Rules.

Glory's ties with the East Perth ground effectively ended last weekend and they have since been offered Leederville Oval for the next four seasons prior to the completion of a Western Australian Government owned purpose built stadium.

"I reckon it is good that we are going to Leederville Oval but it is going to take a lot of hard work to simulate the same atmosphere as that achieved at Perth Oval" said Glory striker Bobby Despotovski after the match.

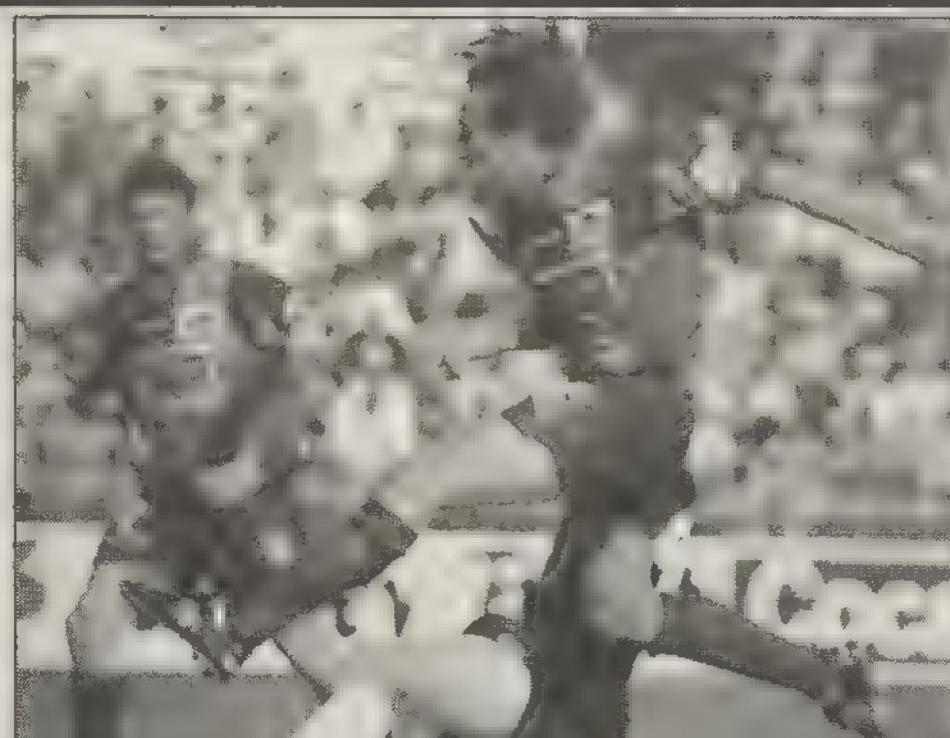
Last weekend's clash saw Glory in devastating form for the first 45 minutes before struggling to take a strangle hold after the break when Knights' goalkeeper Martin John was replaced following a collision with Despotovski which led to the second goal.

An indication of how electric the game was going to be came in the opening minute when the Knights' Michael Reda was yellow carded for a charge on Con Boutsianis.

After Scott Miller had a strike touched away for a corner in the 3rd minute, John then denied Gareth Naven four minutes later followed by a quality save to a Boutsianis free-kick in the 16th minute.

Glory's opening goal however, came from the resultant corner when Boutsianis played it short to Robbie Trajkovski, who centred accurately to the head of Alastair Edwards who was lurking at the back post.

Glory goalie Anthony Franken was called on to make his first save in the 25th minute when he palmed away a stinging strike by Tom Podeljak. The forward went on



Anthony Franken had that the Glory Boyz are leaving Perth Oval but is looking forward to Glory's new home at Leederville. Glory won their last game 3-1.

to become a constant thorn in the home side's defence with his incessant penetration and powerful shooting.

Glory defender Tony Carbone was playing his second game in as many weeks after an absence of three months and again proved a valuable contributor after keeping the dangerous Ice Kutlesovski quiet for most of the 90 minutes.

The home side suffered a set-back in the 28th minute when an Ante Deak short corner was forced home by Reda.

Controversy reared its head in the 34th minute when a Michael Garcia centre was challenged by Despotovski and John, with the former finding the net by being first to the ball while John slumped to the floor as the visitors cried foul.

Even a Knights' official claimed after the game that an elbow caused the concussion, while Despotovski said

the collision occurred on the way down.

Play was held up for five minutes with medical staff reluctant to allow John to continue because of apparent concussion.

He was eventually replaced by Zeljko Susa for the second half. If that wasn't bad enough, the Knights were reduced to ten men four minutes after the goal when Ivan Kelic was sent off for saying the wrong thing to referee Eddie Lennie.

After Naven shook the Knights' crossbar in the 52nd minute, Gianfranco Circati made it 3-1 seconds later when he easily headed home a short corner.

Any likelihood of a cricket score being inflicted never eventuated because of a defiant Melbourne rearguard that restricted Glory to very few opportunities.

The final scoring chance fell to Melbourne's Lance Plunkett in the 83rd minute whose fierce 30 metre rocket

MATCH STATS...

Referee: Eddie Lennie

Crowd: 15,482

Perth Glory:

A. Franken, R. Trajkovski, G. Naven (J. Harnwell 79), S. Miller, P. Strudwick, B. Despotovski (V. Kalogeracos 65), M. Garcia (T. Haiglin 57), C. Boutsianis, T. Carbone, G. Circati, A. Edwards.

Melbourne Knights:

M. John, S. Susa (46), D. Nastevski, I. Jolic, A. Kovacevic, I. Kelic, T. Podeljak, J. Rajher, P. Magdic, A. Deak (Plunkett 75), M. Reda, I. Kutlesovski (Collina 65).

Yellow:
Reda, John, Deak

Red: Kelic

Votes for Player of the Year:

- 3: T. Carbone (PG)
- 2: R. Trajkovski (PG)
- 1: Podeljak (MK)

was superbly saved by Franken to his right.

After the game, the Glory boys went on a lap of honour as their way of thanking the fans for placing Western Australian soccer on the Australian map in dramatic fashion.

The 15,482 attendance at Perth Oval last Sunday brought the total attendance to 206,143, to nudge past Northern Spirit's season gross at North Sydney Oval by 1,288 (204,855). In all, a total of 555,091 soccer devotees flowed through the turnstiles since 1996 at an average of 13,877 for the 40 home fixtures.

Meanwhile, it has been announced that Perth Glory will be wearing a Kappa shirt next season after a three year association with Umbro. It is believed Northern Spirit is also joining the Italian sports clothing company for 1999/2000.

See the Bernd Stange interview on page seven.

ERICSSON CUP

WEEK 25
16-18 APRIL
1999

END OF AN ERA FOR SHARKS?

ADELAIDE SHARKS

1

Alagich 21

BRISBANE STRIKERS

0

McLaren 29, 32

At Hindmarsh Stadium in Adelaide

By Margaret Bowden and Donald Campbell

Is this the end of an era? National League Champions in 1978. Out of the League in 2000?

The small crowd at Hindmarsh may have witnessed the Sharks' historic last match in the NSL. Every spectator except Strikers' coach John Kosmina's father was willing the Sharks to win. Even if the Sharks do survive, it was farewell to the Alexes - Duric and Kuzmanovic, and the locals wanted a home win.

Buoyed by a Greek radio 'Save the Sharks' appeal which had raised \$75,000 by late on Friday night, the small band of faithful supporters and the neutrals who believe soccer in South Australia will never be the same without its famous Sharks v Zebra derbies, celebrated an early Richie Alagich goal.

But ex AIS player, Stirling Albion and Hong Kong

midfielder Stuart McLaren spoiled the party, heading two goals in quick succession.

Even in defeat, however, the Sharks saluted their fans at the end, who in turn gave them a standing ovation for persevering in playing exciting soccer despite the off field problems.

The game started at breakneck speed, with Joel Porter roaring into the box in the second minute. Striker's keeper Clint Bolton came off his line, Porter chipped, the crowd were on their feet - but a Brisbane defender got a touch with his head to deflect the ball.

The Strikers had a chance 15 minutes later, but a mad scramble in the box saw Sharks' keeper Nathan Wildy knock the ball out.

McLaren then missed his first chance, eluding Shark Paul Pezos, who suffered an ankle injury in the opening minutes, and shooting from inside the box - over the bar.

The next 3 minutes saw the Sharks go into overdrive. Alagich turned on the magic, dodging and weaving into the right side of the penalty area and letting fly a screamer. The shot was blocked by Glenn Gwynne, but rebounded to Aaron Westervelt who hammered the ball just wide of the near post.

Bolton could do nothing to stop Alagich's next shot. Corey Artone switched the ball from the left to Alagich wide on the right.

Alagich tapped the ball to Elias Demourtzidis on his left, who knocked it back out to Alagich continuing his run down the right. Alagich steamed into the box and let fly GOAL! 1-0 Sharks after 22 minutes.

Brisbane did not like the scoreline. Within ten minutes they turned the tables.

Kasey Wehrman took control of the midfield, working with Andy Harper and McLaren to blitz the Sharks' defence.

Seven minutes after Alagich's strike, McLaren ghosted into the left hand side of the box to connect with a brilliant cross from Harper and angle a header past Wildy - 1-1.

Four minutes later, he repeated the move, but this time 88.5 Coast FM Player of the Match Wehrman provided the cross - 2-1 Brisbane.

This spurred Branko Milosevic, who came into his own for the Sharks, taking the mickey out of Wehrman at the back and sending his team forward.

The Strikers' best scoring chance of the game came a minute before half time.

Des Hughes, McLaren and Harper all appeared well offside in the penalty area, but there was no flag! Wildy deflected Hughes' shot to Harper, whose shot was blocked and fell to McLaren. McLaren hit the post from 4 metres!

Disgusted with himself, he turned clown, pulling his shirt over his face to hide his shame.

Although there were no goals in the second half, both sides played entertaining soccer. There were a few shots over the bar, but no real chances.

The game became a battle of the midfields, with

MATCH STATS...

Crowd: 1500 (unofficial)

Referee: Wayne Dade

Adelaide Sharks: Wildy, Alagich, Castro, Kuzmanovic, Artone (Mihalopoulos 61), Milosevic, Duric, Pezos (Kokkinopoulis 67), Porter, Westervelt, Demourtzidis

Brisbane Strikers: Bolton, Gwynne, Zoricich, Laybutt, Harper, Wehrman, McLaren (Bell 69), Knipe, Hews, Hughes (Drake 61), Stefanutto.

Yellows:

Adelaide Sharks: Westervelt
Brisbane Strikers: Knipe, Wehrman

Votes for Player of the Year:

- 3: Kasey Wehrman (Bris)
- 2: Branko Milosevic (Sharks)
- 1: McLaren (Bris)

possession shared equally in a good, open game, helped by referee Wayne Dade who let it flow.

PUMAS SLIP-UP IN THE COUNTRY

GIPPSLAND FALCONS

0

SYDNEY UNITED

0

At Mobil Park, Gippsland.

By Damian Tripodi

The Falcons put a hold on the possibility of an early minor premiership celebration, by holding the powerful Sydney United to a nil all draw.

For the Falcons this was the fourth draw in succession. Coach Stuart Munro stated at the end of the game that "had we played like this earlier in the year, we wonder what could have been."

At the 10th minute, Gippsland keeper Bojo Jevdevic, who put in another solid performance, was tested through a Jacob Burns header from a corner kick.

Led by captain Jeff Hopkins, the Falcons gradually regrouped and found their cohesion. 28 mins in and Will Hastie hustled and won the ball on the left flank, pinpointed a cross to Sash Belevnovski in a crowded six yard box, however, as he went to shoot for goal, miraculously Peter Bennett managed to get a foot in.

A great volley, pulled back from the bye-line by Lev Osman at the 39th led to Brian Macnicol slotting the ball into the net, however, the goal was disallowed for interference to the United keeper Mike Gibson.

Gippsland at this stage had a clear ascendancy.

Mike Sterjovski pounced on the ball following a Nathan Day dummy, and forced Jevdevic to make a

great save at the 40th and just prior to half time, Clayton Bell hustled and won the ball on the wing, lost it, recovered and won it again cross to Macnicol, but his shot was well judged and saved.

The recent positional move made by coach Stuart Munro by leaving Andy Vargas in a sweeping role and Osman in a wing back position was also working.

A quality lay off by Perinovic seven minutes into the half resulted in a good shot at goal by Osman.

Osman again in a great overlapping run at the 27th set up Belevnovski whose shot again went just over the bar for the Falcons, and, Walter Ardone from a free kick almost scored for the visitors late in the game.

The search for a late goal continued with attacks and counter attacks by both sides, but the game was destined to finish as a draw.

Sydney United coach David Mitchell said: "I knew that it would be a difficult game and we came prepared. I also knew that Stuart (Munro) would be competitive and he wanted nothing better than to beat his old side", stated the coach.

quickly swivelled and kicked the ball towards Petkovic's goal.

His attempt was little better than Trajanovski but again luck was with Marconi as Alex Tobin came stumbling across to tackle Awaritefe. Tobin was late and merely proceeded to fortuitously deflect the ball past a stranded Jason Petkovic, who could only watch it trickle past him into his left hand corner for, what turned out to be, the only goal of the match.

The second half was little better than the first with neither team showing much improvement.

In the 52nd minute sub Nick Sabljak beat two defenders down the right hand touchline and delivered a good cross to the near post where the ever dangerous Damian Mori was lurking. He was first to the ball but his glancing header missed its target and headed towards the left corner post.

The ball reached Louis Brain who played it back to Hassell whose high cross toward the far post seemed to be heading over the touchline until the high jumping Sabljak intervened as he headed it back across the goal into the path of Dodd.

Dodd controlled the ball and beat one opponent before shooting left footed towards Covic's right side. The 'keeper was equal to the task and brilliantly deflected over the bar for a corner.

Marconi came closest in the 69th minute when a neat move by Smith provided Renaud with an opportunity. Renaud controlled Smith's pass with his chest and took the ball inside his opponent and blasted the ball with his 'wrong' right foot and beat Petkovic but not the bottom of his right post.

Marconi created two more chances with captain Maloney coming to the fore on both occasions.

In the 80th minute Maloney received a pass from Smith and dribbled the ball to the penalty box where he propped and produced an exquisite chip towards

MATCH STATS...

Crowd: 2000 (estimated)

Referee: Jeremy Blainey

Gippsland Falcons: Jevdevic, Hopkins, Osman, Macnicol, Beli, Robertson, Canosa, Perinovic, Vargas, Hastie, Belevnovski, McDonald (75th)

Sydney United: Gibson, Barret, Piesa, Krpesak, Burns, Ardone (Morc 86th), Sterjovski, Day (Griffith 70th), Berry, Santalab, Bennett.

Votes for Player of the Year:

- 3: Krpesak (SU)
- 2: Osman (GF)
- 1: Bel, GF

MARCONI LOOKING GOOD

MARCONI

1

Awaritefe 43

0

ADELAIDE CITY

0

At Marconi Stadium, Sydney

By John Vratic

A few weeks ago Marconi were playing poorly and looked out of the running for the top six but a resurgence culminating in a somewhat fortunate 1-0 victory over Adelaide has guaranteed them a spot in the six with one round to be played.

Even the sprinklers coming on during the game couldn't dampen the day for Marconi!

Marconi coach Frank Farina made one change to his team with the return of Brendan Renaud to the left wing spot replacing Mike Smith. Darren McDonald was left out to accommodate Smith in midfield.

The first half was an uninspiring performance from both sides but particularly from Marconi who had trouble putting more than two passes together whilst Adelaide, playing their normal possession game, couldn't create any clear cut chances.

The first real attack of the game occurred in the 7th minute when youngster Travis Dodd beat his opponent, Robert Hooker, for speed and fired in a deep cross to the far post. Damian Mori positioned himself to the best advantage and was able to head the ball across the goal but a Marconi defender was first to the ball and cleared it for a corner.

Marconi had its first shot on goal in the 12th minute when a Mike Smith dummy left his opponent wrong footed giving him the space to let go a left foot drive that whistled over the bar.

Adelaide's attacking raids stemmed mostly via Dodd, on the right, and Brad Hassell on the left. Both players were getting in behind the defence with Dodd causing Robbie Hooker considerable trouble while Hassell used his speed to keep Renaud alert.

Unfortunately for all their industrious work the final crosses lacked accuracy and were on most occasions too close to Marconi goalkeeper, Ante Covic, who handled them with ease.

Marconi's main source of attack, as usual, was their captain, Brad Maloney and it was his effort in the 41st minute that provided the home team with the catalyst to wake from their insipid performance.

A Maloney 50 metre cross-field ball from within his own half of the field released Francis Awaritefe deep on Adelaide's left flank. He rounded his marker, Angelo Costanzo, with ease as he strode toward the by line but was foiled at the death by good tackle by the Milan Ivanovic.

Marconi was rewarded in the last minute. A throw in deep within Adelaide's left wing caused havoc within the box as the visitors failed to clear the ball. The ball reached the head of Dominic Longo who headed it across the goal towards Kris Trajanovski whose shooting attempt was mediocre at best.

Lady luck smiled on Trajanovski, and Marconi, as the shot was steered towards the lurking Awaritefe who

quickly swivelled and kicked the ball towards Petkovic's goal.

His attempt was little better than Trajanovski but again luck was with Marconi as Alex Tobin came stumbling across to tackle Awaritefe. Tobin was late and merely proceeded to fortuitously deflect the ball past a stranded Jason Petkovic, who could only watch it trickle past him into his left hand corner for, what turned out to be, the only goal of the match.

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In the 80th minute Maloney received a pass from Smith and dribbled the ball to the penalty box where he propped and produced an exquisite chip towards

MATCH STATS...

Crowd: 5,469

Referee: M. Shield

Marconi: Covic, Farah, Babic, Longo, Hooker, Renaud, Smith, Gibson, Maloney, Awaritefe, Trajanovski

Adelaide: Petkovic, Dodd (Menni) o 73, Hawrysz (Sabljak 46), Ivanovic, Tobin (Taladira 74), Costanzo, Terminello, Hassell, Brain, Veart, Mori

Yellow Cards: Marconi, Longo 87

Votes for Player of the Year:

- 3: Smith (Marconi)
- 2: Maloney (Marconi)
- 1: Costanzo (Adelaide)

Petkovic's left corner but the 'keeper was again equal to the task and pushed the ball past the post.

In the 87th minute a counter attack by Maloney took the ball deep into Adelaide's half where he released it to Trajanovski. The attacker took the ball inside the box but his powerful left foot shot was well saved by Petkovic.

In an even game Marconi was fortunate to come away with a win with Smith and Maloney being its best performers whilst Adelaide was best served by its defence of Costanzo, Ivanovic and, particularly in the first half, Dodd.

National Youth League

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SOUTHERN DIVISION

Round 27

Saturday 17 April

VIS	5	Albury Wodonga	0
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Round 29

Sunday 18 April 1999

South Melbourne	1	Bulleen Inter	2
Gippsland Falcons	3	VIS	3
Melbourne Knights	0	Carlton	4

Albury Wodonga v Bye

League Ladder

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Carlton	23	16	4	3	66	26	52
South Melbourne	22	12	3	7	42	24	39
VIS	19	9	5	5	38	30	32
Gippsland Falcons	22	9	3	10	38	34	30
Melbourne Knights	23	9	3	11	44	48	30
Bulleen Inter Kings	20	8	3	9	28	35	27
Albury Wodonga	21	1	1	19	20	79	4

ROUND 28

Wednesday 21 April 1999

VIS v Albury Wodonga, (Grange Reserve, 1 pm)
Bulleen Inter v VIS, (Veneto Park, 7 pm)

Round 30

Saturday 24 April 1999

Carlton v Bulleen Inter (Anderson Reserve, Doncaster, 3 pm)

Albury Wodonga v VIS, (Myrtleford, 6 pm)

Sunday 25 April 1999

Melbourne Knights v Gippsland Falcons,
(Knights Stadium, 4.30pm)

Bye v South Melbourne

Round 25

Tuesday 27 April 1999

South Melbourne v VIS, (Bob Jane Stadium, 6 pm)

Southern Summary ... The VIS returned from its unbeaten tour of Malaysia to play Albury Wodonga at Grange Reserve on Saturday, turning in another fine performance to win by five goals to nil. A day later they took on Falcons who won 3-0, goals scored by Alex Halikias, Billy Mitroulas and Ross Duckworth.

Carlton confirmed its favouritism to win the Southern title by beating Melbourne Knights four-nil on Sunday. Tony Oularis scored the first of his two goals in 28 minutes. Ace Stojcevski made it two in 51 minutes, followed by a third from Serdar Pir (right). Oularis completed the scoring in 77 minutes. Carlton thus finishes on top of the Southern Division ladder.

Bulleen caused a big upset by defeating South Melbourne two-one at Bob Jane Stadium. Daniel Malina put the home team in front after 18 minutes, but Robert Ardesi equalised in 27 minutes and ten minutes later Nathan Thomas scored what proved to be the winner.

Northern Summary Northern Spirit had a two-one win away to Newcastle Breakers. Antonio Faria opened for Spirit in 59 minutes. Greg Owens seemed to have rescued a point for the Breakers with a goal in 71 minutes, but Elvic Olic scored the winner for the Spirit in the 84th minute.

Marconi downed its Colts team by four goals to one.



LEADING SOUTHERN SCORERS

Andrew Masholan	South Melb	17
Deniz Ozkaynak	Carlton	10
Tony Oularis	Carlton	9
Scott McDonald	VIS	8
Angelo Motsiopoulos	VIS	7

Round 21

Thursday 29 April 1999

Bulleen Inter v VIS, (Veneto Park, 7 pm)

On Sunday Marconi played its catch up game from Round 16 against the QAS, winning 2-1.

In its Round 30 game the QAS had better fortune beating Wollongong Colts 1-0. Sydney United beat Northern Spirit Colts 4-0.

NSWIS and the AIS played their Round 30 game a week early with the AIS running out winners 4-1. Grant Last opened in 19 minutes, and Kevo Gulessarian made it two in 29. Tom Bajurin scored with a deflected shot in 75 minutes and Gulessarian got his second in 80 minutes.

There was time for young Mathew Rosier to score his first goal in the NYL in 87 minutes. Mark Byrnes returned for the Institute following his trip to Nigeria with the Young Socceroos and Jeff van Straten had a serviceable game in goals despite the scoreline. The pick of the AIS team were Ljubo Milicevic, Gulessarian and John Cvetanovski.

ACTAS had Yosef Zamora to thank for a very late winner against Sydney Olympic Academy. The game's only goal came in stoppage time.

Sydney Olympic confirmed second spot on the ladder with a four-two win over Wollongong Wolves at home. Adrian Cervinski scored twice and Lee Miot and Adrian Totaro scored the others.

For the Wolves Michael Clare scored both goals.

NORTHERN DIVISION

Round 29

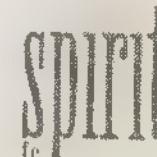
Newcastle Breakers	1	Northern Spirit	2
Marconi Fairfield	4	Marconi Fairfield Colts	1
Northern Spirit Colts	0	Sydney United 4	0
Wollongong Wolves Colts	0	QAS	1
Sydney United Colts	1	NSWIS	3
NSWIS	1	AIS	4
Sydney Olympic Academy	0	ACTAS	1
Sydney Olympic	4	Wollongong Wolves	2

Round 16

Marconi Fairfield	2	QAS	1
		AIS v Bye	



League Ladder



	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
AIS	28	20	7	1	103	19	67
Sydney Olympic	27	20	3	4	89	30	63
Northern Spirit	27	19	2	6	65	23	59
Marconi Fairfield	27	17	5	5	77	23	56
NSWIS	28	17	3	8	69	33	54
Newcastle Breakers	26	16	5	5	58	28	53
Wollongong Wolves	26	16	2	8	79	1	50
QAS	27	15	2	10	71	42	47
Sydney United	27	11	4	12	54	48	37
Marconi Fairfield Colts	27	8	4	15	35	48	28
ACTAS	27	6	3	18	36	73	21
Northern Spirit Colts	27	4	3	20	23	100	15
Sydney Olympic Academy	28	3	5	20	26	99	14
Sydney United Colts	27	4	1	22	27	91	13
Wollongong Wolves Colts	27	1	3	23	15	137	6

ROUND 27

Tuesday 20 April

Newcastle Breakers v Wollongong Wolves,
(Breakers Stadium, 5pm)

ROUND 30

Saturday 24 April

Marconi Fairfield Colts v Sydney Olympic.
(Marconi Stadium, 3pm)

Sydney United v Wollongong Wolves Colts.
(Ecclesior Park, 3 pm)

LEADING NORTHERN SCORERS

Kevo Gulessarian	AIS	23
Mark Haggard	Marconi	22
Simon Catanzaro	NSWIS	20
Daniel Kukucka	Sydney United	16

(Marconi Stadium, 7.15 pm)

QAS v Newcastle Breakers.

(Suncorp Stadium, 2.30 pm)

ACTAS v Northern Spirit Colts,

(Bruce Stadium, 4.30 pm)

Bye v Sydney Olympic Academy

Marconi Fairfield v Northern Spirit;



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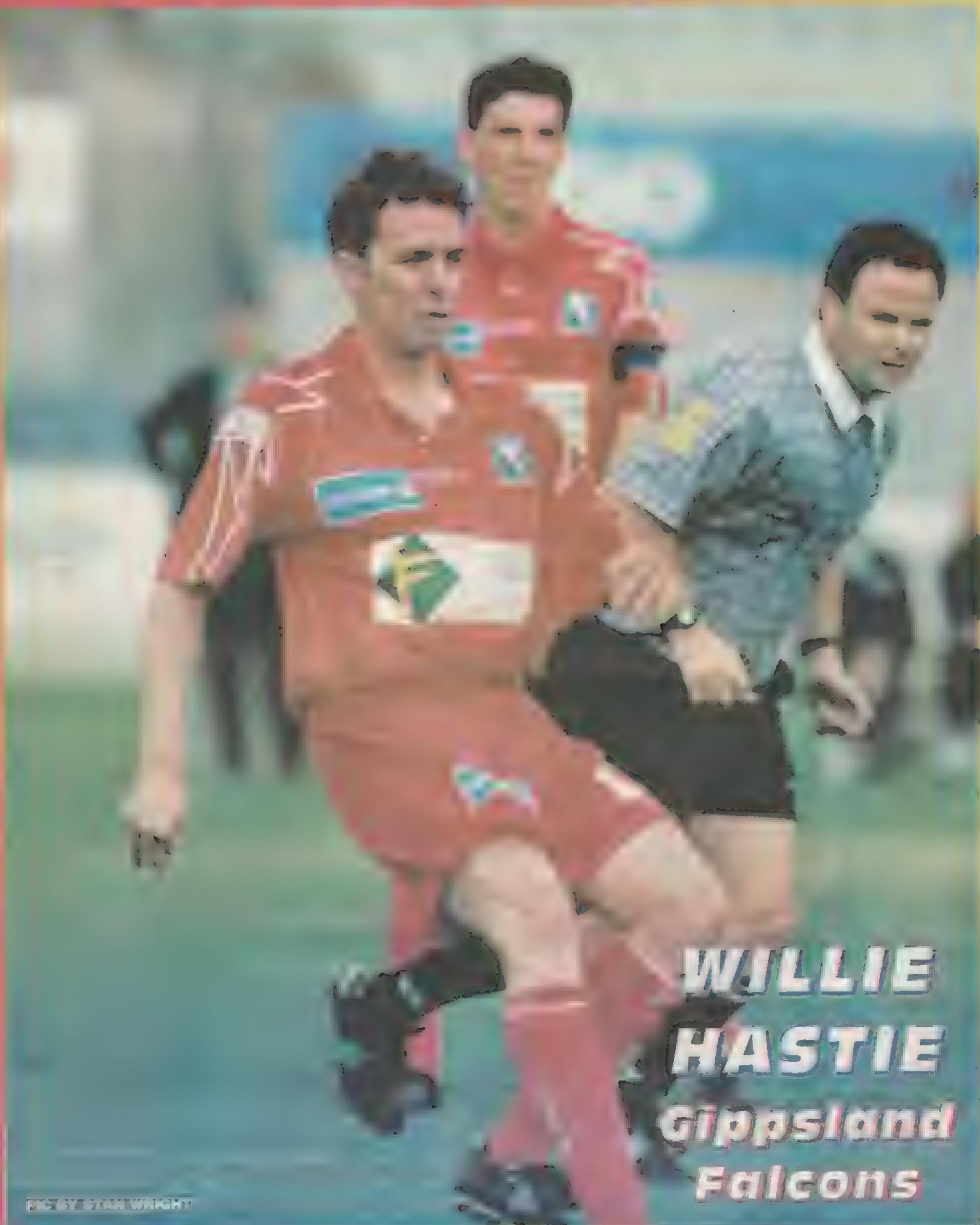
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Soccer Weekly



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Falcons*

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DANNY
HAY

*Perth Glory
and
New Zealand*



NSW SUPER LEAGUE

BONNY LADS ROAR AGAINST LIONS

It's a case of as you were in Super League after Round 12, with the top four teams all winning. Bonnyrigg had the hardest game on paper, away at Bankstown City Lions, but came home with a 2-1 victory courtesy of goals from Robert Gomez and Colin Luff, his tenth of the season.

The victory may come at a cost though, as barn-storming defender Mark Racker was taken off injured and Roman Nikolic was dismissed for two yellow card offences. For the



Bonnyrigg won away to Lions 2-1.

home team big defender Damien Lukic scored, but the White Eagles got revenge for a 5-2 thrashin in round 1 of the season.

Macarthur and Blacktown City Demons were also joint top of the table before the round, and it continued that way with the Rams downing the Central Coast and the Demons sneaking past Eastern Suburbs.

The Rams blitzed the Coasties 4-0 at Plum Park, but had to wait until the 53rd minute before scoring their first goal through Eric Williams. Williams added another with just 6 minutes later to round off the scoring, and in between goals from David Reid and Trevor Whiddett secured the points. Blacktown would have fancied an easy win over struggling Eastern Suburbs, but Naoki Imaya made it 1-0 for the Wanderers at half-time. Aaron Holst leveled for the Demons on the hour mark, then goals in the last ten minutes from Steve Riches and Jon Angelucci made it 3-1.

A goal in the last few minutes by Manny Mitakidis gave us the final score of Eastern Suburbs 2 Blacktown City Demons 3.

The team in fourth of the start of the day, Fairfield Bulls, proved too strong for Ryde City, with striker Matthew Borg grabbing all four of his team's goals in a 4-1 victory. Borg is now the leading scorer in the competition with 11 goals, and two in each half saw his team home. Craig Sharpley scored a consolation goal for the Gunners. In the day's other games Parramatta Eagles beat Leichhardt Tigers 2-0, while a last minute goal by Canterbury Marrickville's Steve Christoforidis gave his team a 2-1 victory over the Sutherland Sharks.

In 1st Division Stanmore Hawks beat Hurstville Minotaurs in a fiery contest at Arlington Oval, the home side leading 3-0 and almost throwing it away by the finish.

Bathurst won a tight contest at Mona Park against Auburn 2-1, Manly-Warringah became the first team to beat Penrith and retained their own unbeaten record in the process, a 3-2 win their prize.

St George came back from an early goal down to Dulwich Hill to share the spoils at St George Stadium and Illawarra Lions had a sound 3-1 win at Abruzzi Oval over A C United.

Rockdale scored a 7-0 win over Moorebank to address their recent form slump, leaving their opponents anchored at the bottom of the table.

Second Division leaders Hajduk Wanderers wore down Hills United to win 7-1, while Arncliffe hit six past Belmore Hercules at Scots Field.

Mount Pritchard overcame a resilient Sydney District 2-1 at Camden Oval. Sydney University sank Greystanes hopes with two late goals at Bathurst Street Park for a 2-1 win. Mount Druitt won by the same scoreline at Hurstville with a winner in the 85th.

Second Division saw Hajduk Wanderers crack seven past Hills United. Four goals from Damien Brown and two from Tony Krslovic assisted them retain their 100 per cent record at the head of the ladder. Arncliffe Scots hit six for their second win, this time 6-1 over Belmore and three teams all enjoyed 2-1 wins away from home, Mount Druitt at Hurstville ZSC, Mount Pritchard at Sydney District and Sydney University at Greystanes.

NSW SOCCER FEDERATION SUPER LEAGUE

ROUND

13



Saturday 24 April

Blacktown City v Macarthur Rams

Gabbie Stadium, 6pm

Central Coast v Sutherland

Plum Park 6pm

Bonnyrigg W. Eagles v Fairfield Bulls

Serbian Ctr 3pm

Sunday 25 April

Canterbury M/ville v Bankstown City

Henson Park 3pm

Ryde City v Parramatta Eagles

Wentworth Park 3pm

Leichhardt Tigers v Eastern Suburbs

Lambert Park 3pm

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SUPER LEAGUE

	ST	U21	U18	P	W	D	L	F	A	Diff	Pts
Central Coast	v...	Macarthur Rams	0-4	0-0	0-0	0-2					
Bankstown City	v...	Bonnyrigg W.E.	1-2	2-1	1-1						
Fairfield Bulls	v...	Ryde City	4-1	0-0	0-0						
Parramatta Eagles	v...	Leichhardt Tigers	2-0	3-1	1-0						
Eastern Suburbs	v...	Blacktown City	2-3	1-3	0-1						
Sutherland Sharks	v...	Canterbury M/Ville	1-2	2-2	1-2						

AFTER ROUND 12

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Diff	Pts
Macarthur Rams	11	8	1	2	23	10	13	25
B'town City Demons	11	8	1	2	23	11	12	25
Bonnyrigg W. Eagles	12	8	1	3	31	20	11	25
Fairfield Bulls	11	7	2	2	25	16	9	23
Cant/Marrickville	12	5	3	4	19	16	3	18
Leichhardt Tigers	12	5	2	5	20	21	-1	17
Parramatta Eagles	11	5	1	5	18	11	7	16
Bankstown C Lions	12	5	1	6	26	22	4	16
Ryde City	12	2	4	6	14	20	-6	10
Sutherland Sharks	12	2	2	8	13	32	-19	8
Eastern Suburbs	11	2	1	8	15	29	-14	7
Central Coast	11	2	1	8	9	28	-19	7

SUPER YOUTH LEAGUE

ROUND 8

	G/13	G/14	G/15	G/16
Southern Branch v Leichhardt	0-2	1-3	1-7	0-2
G'ville Hornsby v Central Coast	1-0	8-0	9-0	4-0
New. Breakers v Parra. Eagles	w/o	w/o	w/o	w/o
Southern Districts v Sydney Utd	2-0	1-1	0-1	1-0
Mac Rams v Woll. Wolves	0-0	1-2	1-1	0-1
Sydney Olympic v Eastern Subs.	8-2	12-0	5-2	5-1
Blacktown City v Marconi Fair.	5-0	1-3	2-0	2-1
Manly Warringah v Suth. Sharks	2-2	0-1	0-2	1-0

SUPER LEAGUE U/21

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Diff	Pts
Parramatta Eagles	11	8	2	1	29	14	15	26
Bonnyrigg W Eagles	11	7	0	4	20	12	8	21
Macarthur Rams	11	6	2	3	24	13	11	20
Eastern Suburbs	11	6	0	5	19	15	4	18
Fairfield Bulls	11	5	2	4	16	23	-7	17
Blacktown C Demons	11	5	1	5	24	22	2	16
Central Coast	11	4	3	4	16	22	-6	15
Ryde City	11	4	2	5	18	16	2	14
Canterbury M'ville	12	4	2	-6	16	20	-4	14
Sutherland Sharks	12	3	2	7	13	23	-10	11
Leichhardt Tigers	11	3	1	7	23	28	-5	10
Bankstown C Lions	11	3	1	7	12	22	-10	10

SUPER LEAGUE U/18

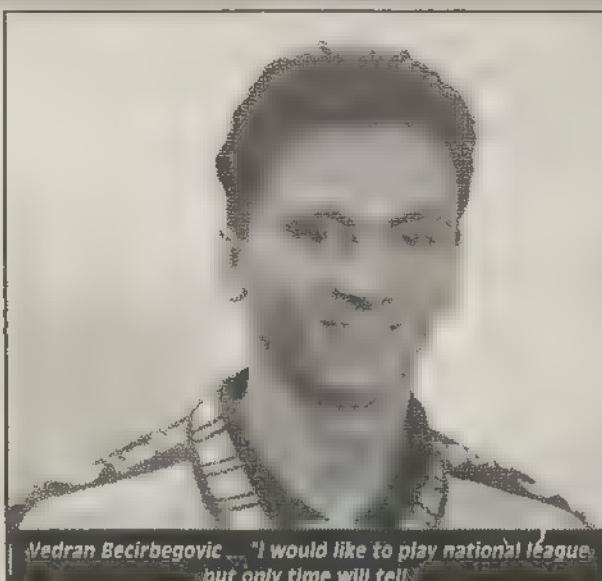
	P	W	D	L	F	A	Diff	Pts
Parramatta Eagles	11	8	1	2	43	11	32	25
Canterbury M'ville	12	6	4	2	23	17	6	22
B/town C Demons	11	6	3	2	22	13	9	21

COMBINED YOUTH LEAGUE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Diff	Pts
Sydney Olympic	32	21	1	10	110	47	63	64
Marconi Fairfield	32	20	1	11	78	49	29	61
Wollongong Wolves	32	18	7	7	58	31	27	61
Southern Districts	28	19	3	6	64	41	23	60
B/town C Demons	28	18	2	8	74	33	42	56

QUEENSLAND

FROM BOSNIA TO BRISBANE



Vedran Becirbegovic "I would like to play national league but only time will tell."

When war broke out in Bosnia in 1992, Vedran Becirbegovic packed his bags and fled the country of his birth. Aged just 21, he found his way to Croatia, Austria and then Australia.

He had started playing football at the age of nine for the Sarajevo based club Zeljeznicar and eventually, had made three appearances for the clubs national league side prior to fleeing the country.

In Croatia, he linked with Orijent who were playing in the Croatian first division and from there he moved to Austria.

"I think my time at Linz was the best I have had. There were two Russian players and a Croatian but the coach kept picking me," Becirbegovic said.

"The Russians were both internationals and very good, maybe the coach just liked me, either way it was a wonderful experience and is something I will always remember."

After spending a whole season with the Austrian second division club, FC Linz, Becirbegovic flew to Brisbane and played in the premier league with local club Rocklea United.

One and a half seasons later, the Brisbane Strikers secured his services but he only stayed for half the season. Playing under coach Frank Farina, Becirbegovic had nothing but praise for Farina and the Strikers.

"They were a very good team and Frank was a very good coach," Becirbegovic said.

"It was a great season for them and I enjoyed my time there very much."

Two years had passed since Becirbegovic had arrived in Australia and having fallen in love with this new country, he took out Australian Citizenship.

In 1997, a trip to Germany to see his parents resulted in an introduction by

BRISBANE CITY	-	Spencer Park, Newmarket
BRISBANE LIONS	-	Lions Stadium, Richlands
BUNDABERG WAVES	-	Thabeban Sports Complex, Bundaberg
GOLD COAST CITY	-	Southport SC, Ashmore
IPSWICH KNIGHTS	-	Eric Evans Reserve, Bundamba
MOUNT GRAVATT	-	Dittmer Park, Mt Gravatt
ROCHEDALE ROVERS	-	Underwood Park, Rochedale
TARINGA ROVERS	-	Jack Speare Park, Indooroopilly
TOOWOOMBA RAIDERS	-	Gold Park, Toowoomba
WYNNUM	-	Carmichael Park, Tingalpa

a friend to an agent, who arranged a trial with FC Brugge. Ironically, Brugge is one of Farina's old clubs.

The trial went well, until they signed a player from Red Star Belgrade instead. However the club suggested and arranged a position with UR Namur, a third division club and Becirbegovic stayed for the season.

He returned home (Australia) this year and is now playing with the Brisbane Lions soccer club based at Richlands in Brisbane. He is enjoying being home and plans to marry his Romanian born fiancee, Daniela, sometime in the next 12 months.

He is also enjoying his football and has notched up four goals already this season. He thinks that the style of play the Lions coach Miron Bleiberg employs is a good thing.

"Miron Bleiberg is a very good coach and I like the way he coaches. His style of play is European which I like," Becirbegovic said.

"The team itself is going well and we should have a good season. We just need to click a little more."

Although there are still many seasons ahead of him, Becirbegovic feels he is too old to play overseas but he would still like to have another go at Australia's national league.

"I want to now play the best possible football I can in Australia and if possible, I would like to play national league again but only time will tell."

Meanwhile Glenn Davis reports that Ipswich Knights served notice they were semi-final contenders by taking the prize scalp of premiership leaders Taringa Rovers in an upset 2-1 win in the Queensland premier league at Bundamba on Sunday.

Taringa, who led the competition on goal differences from Brisbane Lions before the match, suffered the cruelest of blows when Andrej Gacesa fired in the Ipswich winner against a 10-man outfit in virtually the last touch of the game.

Taringa had their backs to the walls in a fearsome clash after only one minute when sweeper Demetri Theochari glanced a header into his own net after a shot by Ipswich striker John Clark looked to be comfortably covered by Taringa keeper Clint Del Santo.

The early goal spurred on the home side in front of a parochial home

crowd but it was Taringa who hit back to draw level before the break when striker Scott Robertson beat Ipswich keeper Sam Ferguson.

Taringa coach John Ogden was proud of his side's fighting spirit in the second half after losing Steven Blund and Shane Molenda with injuries before Jamie Lowndes was sent off five minutes after the resumption.

Ipswich, who are poised just outside the Top Four following the upset, also were dealt a serious injury blow when former State defender Nick Seely suffered a broken arm and could be sidelined for a least six weeks.

"I thought we did enough to get a point," Ogden lamented. "It was a real physical battle but it was a great effort from our boys to play a man short for almost the entire second half."

Taringa's loss emphasises the closeness of the competition as they slipped from top to third place following Brisbane Lions' 6-1 demolition over bottom placed Toowoomba and Rochedale Rovers' 2-1 win over Wynnum.

In other results Mt Gravatt kept Bundaberg scoreless in a 3-nil win in Bundaberg while Brisbane City's inconsistency continued when held to a nil-all away draw by the financially troubled Gold Coast.

Lions, who go two points clear of Rochedale at the top of the table, grabbed a shock 1-nil lead inside the first minute when a major blunder in the Toowoomba defence enabled Lions' speedy striker Warren Allen to slot home. Lions' Geoff Lombardo put the home side ahead 2-nil in the 35th minute with an easy tap in with his first goal of the season following a Wade Cannon bust down the right flank.

Cannon completed a Lions, first half treble racing onto a defence splitting pace before drawing Toowoomba keeper Trevor Gilliland to slot home.

Lions increased their lead to four seven minutes after the break when rangy striker Greg Di Losa headed home an Allen corner while their fifth and sixth goals came from substitute Frank Mengotti.

The first of the Mengotti double came in a goalmouth scramble in the 78th minute with his second five minutes later from a powerful 18 metre strike. The only blot on the Lions' performance came two minutes from time when Brent Hyslop scored a tap in for the visitors' consolation.

Mt Gravatt's new recruit from the Brisbane Strikers, Glen Kolpak picked up a double while Craig Collins got the other in Mt. Gravatt's easy 3-nil win against Bundaberg. Bundaberg had a lot of possession in the game but suffered by not having the confidence to shoot in front of goals while the home side's defence left goalkeeper Michael Bainbridge down badly.

At Southport, Brisbane City and the Gold Coast played out a dull nil-all draw with both sides missing chances to win. Brisbane City came closest to grabbing the three points in the first half when striker Chris Slater hit the crossbar with a header while Gold Coast striker Troy Greenwood struck an attempt wide after the break which could have put the homeside on the road to victory.

City's draw enabled them to stay in the Top Four on 16 points, with Ipswich Knights breathing down their necks just one point away in fifth place.

Rochedale Rovers kept the pressure on new leaders Brisbane Lions with a hard fought 2-1 win over baysiders Wynnum. A double from the under-rated David Pilic helped clinch the three points for Rochedale who conceded their only goal from Wynnum's Nick Hadland.

ROUND 10 SCORES		ROUND 10 SCORES		ROUND 10 SCORES	
Ipswich Knights	.2	Taringa Rovers	.1	Redlands Utd	.1
B'berg Waves	.0	Mt Gravatt	.3	Souths Utd	.0
Brisbane Lions	.6	Toowoomba Utd	.1	Beenleigh	??
Gold Coast	.0	Brisbane City	.1	Slacks Creek	.9
Wynnum	.1	Rochedale Rovers	.2	Inala City	.9
Toowoomba Utd	.1			Olympic Utd	.9
				Redlands Utd	.9
				Acacia Ridge	.3

QUEENSLAND RESULTS AND TABLES

XXIX LEAGUE

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	D	Pts
Brisbane Lions	10	6	2	2	26	16	10	20
Rochedale Rov	10	6	0	4	25	15	10	18
Taringa Rovers	10	5	2	3	17	9	8	17
Brisbane City	9	5	1	3	15	12	3	16
IPSW Knights	9	5	0	4	14	12	2	15
B'berg Waves	10	4	2	4	15	15	0	14
Mt Gravatt	9	3	2	4	18	20	-2	11
Gold Coast	9	2	5	2	13	18	-5	11
Wynnum	10	3	1	6	15	22	-7	10
Toowoomba Utd	10	1	1	8	8	27	-19	4

ROUND 10 SCORES

Ipswich Knights	.2	Taringa Rovers	.1
B'berg Waves	.0	Mt Gravatt	.3
Brisbane Lions	.6	Toowoomba Utd	.1
Gold Coast	.0	Brisbane City	.1
Wynnum	.1	Rochedale Rovers	.2

DIVISION ONE SOUTH

Team	P	W	D	L	G	A	Diff	Pts
Rocklea Utd	7	6	1	0	34	12	22	19
Capalaba	7	6	0	1	17	7	10	18
Souths Utd	8	3	2	3	18	10	8	11
Beenleigh	8	3	2	3	16	20	-4	11
Slacks Creek	9	3	2	4	18	24	-6	11
Inala City	9	3	1	5	16	25	-9	10
Olympic Utd	8	3	0	5	17	18	-1	9
Redlands Utd	8	2	3	3	11	19	-8	9
Acacia Ridge	8	0	3	5	10	22	12	3

ROUND 10 SCORES

Inala City	.0	Redlands Utd	.1
Bye	.0	Souths Utd	.0
Rocklea Utd	.??	Beenleigh	??
Acacia Ridge	.2	Olympic Utd	.4
Capalaba	.3	Slacks Creek	.2

DIVISION ONE NORTH

Team	P	W	D	L	G	A	Diff	Pts
North Star	8	6	0	2	24	12	12	18
Albany Creek	9	5	2</					



PREMIER LEAGUE



SPINK IN THE PINK AFTER TRIPLE TREAT

EX-SOCCEROO DESTROYS SINKING SHARKS

**ALTONA MAGIC 2
MELBOURNE RAIDERS 2**

By Ivan Perkov

A red card to Marjan Tasevski of Altona Magic, and a fan who thought he was the coach. Both these incidents failed to overshadow a game played in attacking fashion which ended in a 2-2 draw between Altona Magic and Melbourne Raiders.

The first half produced many flowing attacks. Altona had chances to take the lead on a few occasions, but desperate defending by the Raiders kept the score to 0-0 at half time.

In the 43rd minute, the Raiders invaded Altona's half, Pino Corallo was put through on the right hand side; he ran toward goal eventually squaring the ball off, it fell to George Slifkas who blasted the ball toward the goal, was it a goal? No. Corallo unfortunately managed to block his own players' shot on the line.

After that Raiders chance, Altona proceeded to produce a similar attack that involved John Sapazovski, Zoran Todorovski and Toni Trifunov, but the eventual Trifunov shot was blocked.

Just after half time, Nick Cuculeski struck, a pin point cross by George Jolevski in the 47th minute was met by the head of Cuculeski. The goal seemed to spark a response.

In the 55th minute, a Zoran Trajevski corner was headed home by Trifunov, he out-jumped his marker and indeed the whole defence to make it 1-1.

Again, Altona attacked at will and were unlucky not to go in front.

That honour was left to Cuculeski. In the 83rd minute he received a long throw from Lurim Saliveski - who had just come on - ran thirty yards, had his pass blocked and put in the rebound. A minute later, Tasevski was sent off for attempting to strike an Raiders player.

The final minutes were nerve-racking for the supporters, one of them thought he would tell the Raiders coach Dusan Kalecic what he thought, the police duly stopped him.

Down to ten men Altona had the spirit to throw everything into attack, it paid off. In the 89th, a ball was floated toward the back post where Simon Micevski laid the ball off to a grateful Tom Markovski who produced a bullet to make it 2-2.

Magic: McGrath, Tasevski (sent off), Ristevski, Micevski, T. Markovski, Vasilevski (S. Markovski), Trajevski (Ashton), Todorovski, Sapazovski, Velkovski

Raiders: Raponi, Angelovski, Boschin, Nedanovski, Iacovitti, Jolevski, Gasparini, Slifkas, Cuculeski, Corallo (Saliveski - Elkersh), Lunguovski.

Referee: Robert Caminiti

Votes: 3- Cuculeski (MR), 2- T. Markovski (AM), 1- Trifunov (AM)

**PORT MELB SHARKS 2
PRESTON LIONS 3**

By Chris Elysse

A second half hat-trick by Warren Spink inspired Preston Lions to a 3-2 victory, in the process ending Port Melbourne's unbeaten run of ten successive games without defeat.

Spink, who was virtually unsighted in the first half, struck goals in the 63rd, 68th and 82nd minutes of the game to give the Lions a much deserved win.

Port Melbourne, missing key defenders Roddy Vargas and John Paul Knezevic, looked shaky at the back all game, with Spink exploiting their hesitance in the most damaging way.

From the outset, Preston dominated possession of play, creating numerous half chances in the opening 20 minutes.

However, referee Dominic Barba threw the Sharks a life-line when he awarded them a dubious penalty after Sasa Ognenovski was deemed to have fouled Nick Tsaltas whilst heading the ball clear.

The resultant spot kick by Kosta Caimakamis was initially saved by Lupce Acevski, but referee Barba allowed Caimakamis to re-take the penalty as Acevski moved off his goal line before the ball was kicked. Caimakamis made no mistake second time around as the Sharks went in at half time 1-0 up.

The second half provided a greater spectacle, with Preston once again dominating. Early chances by Pece Stojcevski and Kamer Simsek went close to providing the Lions with an equaliser.

At the other end, a double save by, firstly Ognenovski to deny Tsaltas and then by Acevski to keep Peter Kakos out kept Preston in it, with their reward coming when a Chris Emsovska corner found Spink far post, whose turn and shot beat a hapless Jamie Cooper in goal.

The same combination teamed up for the second goal as Emsovska latched onto a Stojcevski throw to provide a pin-point cross for Spink to head into the Sharks' goal.

However, the Sharks refused to lie down and after a double substitution, they grabbed an equaliser in the 76th minute. A Tommy Sonsini clearance allowed Kakos to fire in a low cross which was met by George Tzirtzi whose shot nestled into the left hand side of the goal.

A Caimakamis run and cross was nearly put in by Tsaltas shortly after, with his shot once again saved off the line by Ognenovski.

Preston snatched a thoroughly deserved win when a Sasho Slavesci shot wasn't held by Cooper, with Spink ramming home the rebound.

Sharks: Cooper, Palamaras, Livanopoulos (Sonsum), Faki, Tzirtzi, Latinopoulos, Caimakamis, Heath (Tsolakis), Pappas, Tsaltas, Kakos.

Lions: Acevski, Slavesci (Burlak), Kovacic, Filipovski, Ognenovski, Kozic, Simsek (Lisolski), Spink, Talevski (Ibrahim), Emsovska, Stojcevski.

Referee: Dominic Barba
Votes: 3- Spink (PL), 2- Acevski (PL), 1- Emsovska (PL)

**SUNSHINE GEORGIES 0
GREEN GULLY CAVALIERS 2**

By John Rigas

Sunshine Georgies' season continued to slip away on Sunday when they were defeated 2-0 by their old rival Green Gully Cavaliers.

The Georgies now languish second bottom on the table and are four points away from South Dandenong who occupy 11th position and the start of the relegation zone.

The Cavaliers, fighting for the championship in second spot, took the lead in the 20th minute.

Shots by both Steve Douglas and Jam Sunc were blocked before Suric made it third time lucky when his shot beat Steve Wardle in the Georgies goal.

The goal was something of a surprise though as the Georgies had come out hard and created most of the chances in the opening 15 minutes.

Green Gully had the chance to make it 2-0 in the 63rd minute when Tony Nekeski was fouled inside the penalty area but George Sigos hit a post with his shot from the spot.

Soon after Nekeski had a goal disallowed for offside but it was only a matter of time before they got a second goal.

It finally arrived in the 87th minute, when Daniel Genovesi rose above a packed penalty area to head home a Brandon Vassallo free kick.

Georgies: Wardle, Krajacic, Debono, Marakovici, De La Plaza (Hermosilla), Tambouras, Stojanovski, Allain (Barbieri), Kanesoulis (Rozanitis), Kathopoulos, Opazo.

Cavaliers: Brian, Sevin, Azzopardi, Georgiadis, Douglas, Markovski, Vassallo, Sigos (Donev), Suric, Genovesi, Nekeski.

Referee: Robert Ince
Votes: 3- Vassallo (GG), 2- Azzopardi (GG), 1- Kathopoulos (SG).

KARL CONTINUES TO SHINE

**S/VALE W. EAGLES 1
FAWKNER BLUES 2**

By Patrick Tomson

Fawkner continued on their winning way with a competent 2-1 win over a competitive Springvale outfit.

Both teams started evenly until an infringement inside the box led to Fawkner's first scoring opportunity. Referee Rick Arturi, awarded a penalty for the Blues in the 14th minute after spotting an apparent push by Springvale's Zlatko Mihajlovic.

The resultant spot kick was taken by Fawkner's Frank Tramontana. He made no mistake, sending the White Eagles' keeper Borisav Simic the wrong way to put his team into the lead.

With Fawkner taking command after their early goal, Springvale found themselves having to defend continuous attacks. A rushed clearance by William Armour found the feet of Blues' elusive forward Enzo De Santis who angled in a shot on goal. However, Springvale's custodian, Simic, was up to the challenge, narrowing his angle well and making an important save.

Peter Psarros' reckless challenge on substitute Sam Poutakidis earned him a yellow card and left his side in an unenviable position of having to defend a dangerous free kick for the White Eagles.

The kick was taken by Springvale midfielder Sasa Nikolic, just outside the attacking 18 yard box. The cross was cleared only as far as the advancing Nikolic who followed in his kick superbly to fire in a hurtling shot that whistled narrowly over the crossbar.

Lacking the drive as in the first half, Fawkner brought on goal scorer Santo Emmanuele mid-way through the second half with almost immediate effect. Five minutes after coming on, Emmanuele scored Fawkner's second to take a firm grip on the game. A

piercing through ball by Ivan Duzel tore Springvale's defence open, leaving Emmanuele with only the keeper to beat. He swooped on the pass and nestled the shot in the back of the net.

Springvale were able to salvage a late goal in the 83rd minute when Fawkner's keeper Gonzalez was unable to hold onto a high cross, with Milan Mihajlovic making no mistake.

White Eagles: Simic, Calomino, M. Mihajlovic, Milnar, Culibrk (Poutakidis), Styczen, Nikolic (Oter), Rikanic, Z. Mihajlovic, Armour, Mandic.

Blues: Gonzalez, Tramontana, Grimaud, P. Ferrante, Schipano, V. Ferrante, Bordignon, De Santis (Emmanuele), Duzel (Alexopoulos), Psarros (Simsek), Collins.

Referee: Rick Arturi
Votes: 3- Tramontana (FB), 2- Duzel (FB), 1- Poutakidis (SWE)

**ST ALBANS 2
SOUTH DANDY 0**

By Ivan Perkov

Hrvoje 'Harry' Karl, once again, proved his worth with two goals in the St Albans Saints' hard fought 2-0 victory against a persistent, but unlucky, South Dandenong.

After good shielding and determination by Ivan Razov, Karl pounced on a half cleared ball and duly drilled the ball into the net to make it 1-0 in the 44th

After the end-to-end attacking by both sides, South Dandenong were, on several occasions, left exposed at the back.

It was in the 69th that Karl, after a Stanidis cross and text book build up, made the victory safe with a header past the stranded Chris Roche.

After the game, Saints coach Horvat was relieved: "We showed that we have potential, we played well and this victory will help us a lot"

eat well live well

ROUND 10 DETAILS

Green Gully Cavaliers 0 - Springvale White Eagles 1 (Z. Mihajlovic)

ROUND 11 DETAILS

Altona Magic 2 Melbourne Raiders 2, Port Melb Sharks 2 Preston 3, Springvale W. Eagles 1 Fawkner 2, Sunshine 0 G. Gully 2, St Albans 2 S. Dandy 0.

ROUND 12 FIXTURES

	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Port Melbourne Sharks	11	8	2	1	27	10
Green Gully Cavaliers	11	7	2	2	25	14
Preston Lions	11	7	0	4	25	15
Melbourne Raiders	11	5	3	3	17	16
Bentleigh Greens	10	3	5	2	18	13
Bulleen Inter Kings	10	3	5	2	15	11
Fawkner Blues	11	4	2	5	16	16
St Albans Saints	11	4	2	5	15	18
Altona Magic	11	4	2	5	19	28
Springvale White Eagles	11	3	3	5	14	14
South Dandenong	11	3	3	5	17	20
Altona East	10	3	2	5	11	17
Sunshine Georgies	11	2	2	7	12	25
Westvale	10	1	3	6	11	6

Saturday April 24

South Dandenong v Port Melbourne Sharks - kick off 3pm at George Andrews Reserve

Sunday April 25

Fawkner Blues v Sunshine Georgies - kick off 3pm at Smith Reserve

Bentleigh Greens v Springvale White Eagles - kick off 3pm at Kingston Heath Reserve

Altona East v Westvale - kick off 3pm at Paisley Park

Preston Lions v Bulleen Inter Kings - kick off 3pm at Goodyear Stadium

Monday April 26

Melbourne Raiders v St Albans Saints - kick off 8.15pm at Epping Soccer Stadium

Green Gully Cavaliers v Altona Magic - kick off 8.15pm at Green Gully Reserve





CRAZY JOHN'S STATE LEAGUE



	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Lalor United	4	3	0	1	8	2	9
Heidelberg United	3	3	0	0	8	2	9
Oakleigh	4	3	0	1	6	2	9
Western Suburbs	4	2	1	1	7	4	7
Nth G. Warriors	4	2	1	1	5	3	7
Westgate	4	2	1	1	7	6	7
Kingston City	4	2	0	2	5	7	6
Melbourne City	4	2	0	2	6	10	6
Doncaster Rovers	4	1	1	2	6	6	4
Richmond	4	1	1	2	6	7	4
Springvale City	4	1	1	2	3	5	4
Yarraville Glory	4	1	1	2	5	8	4
Northcote City	3	0	1	2	5	7	1
Werribee City	4	0	0	4	2	10	0

ROUND 5

Saturday April 24

Lalor United v Western Suburbs
Yarraville Glory v Kingston City

Sunday April 25

Northcote City v Springvale City
Melbourne City v Heidelberg United
North Geelong Warriors v Doncaster Rovers
Oakleigh v Westgate
Richmond v Werribee City



DIVISION 2 - ROUND 4

Geelong 1 - Essendon 1

Cranbourne Comets 4 - Ringwood City 0
Diamond Valley United 0 - Knox City 1
Altona City 2 - Thomastown/Regent 1
Frankston Strikers 1 - Frankston Pines 1
Old Scotch Waverley 4 - Satellite City Rovers 1
Croydon City Arrows 3 - East Richmond 2

Essendon	4	3	1	0	9	1	10
Knox City	4	3	0	1	8	2	9
Old Scotch Waverley	4	3	0	1	8	4	9
Frankston Pines	4	2	2	0	11	3	8
Geelong	4	2	2	0	9	3	8
Cranbourne Comets	4	2	2	0	9	4	8
Thomastown/Regent	4	2	1	1	7	5	7
East Richmond	4	1	2	1	4	4	5
Satellite City Rovers	4	1	1	2	4	10	4
Altona City	4	1	1	2	2	8	4
Croydon City Arrows	4	1	0	3	3	7	3
Frankston Strikers	4	0	2	2	2	8	2
Diamond Valley United	4	0	0	4	2	9	0
Ringwood City	4	0	0	4	1	11	0

ROUND 5 FIXTURES

Saturday April 24

East Richmond v Satellite City Rovers
Essendon v Croydon City Arrows
Frankston Pines v Geelong
Thomastown/Regent v Frankston Strikers
Knox City v Altona City
Ringwood City v Diamond Valley United
Cranbourne Comets v Old Scotch Waverley

DIVISION 3 - ROUND 4

Keilor Park 1 - Fitzroy City 3
South Wantirna 3 - Broadmeadows City 0
Bell Park 2 - Williamstown 2
South Springvale 2 - Mooroolbark 0
Pascoe Vale 3 - Laverton Park 2
Moreland City 2 - North Coburg United 1
Stonnington City 2 - Banyule City 0

Stonnington City	4	4	0	0	10	2	12
Moreland City	4	3	0	1	9	6	9
Williamstown	4	2	2	0	11	7	8
Fitzroy City	4	2	2	0	11	7	8
South Springvale	4	2	2	0	6	3	8
South Wantirna	4	2	1	1	7	4	7



PROVISIONAL LEAGUE

DIVISION 1 - ROUND 2

Dandenong 2 - Brunswick City 3
Templestowe Eagles 2 - Endeavour United 3
North Sunshine Eagles 0 - Morwell Pegasus 5
Monbulk 3 - South Caulfield 5
Springvale Condors 1 - Sydenham Park 4
Mitcham United 1 - Riversdale 3

Monwell Pegasus	2	2	0	0	8	1	6
Endeavour United	2	2	0	0	5	2	6
Brunswick City	2	2	0	0	4	2	6
Sydenham Park	2	1	1	0	5	2	4
Mitcham United	2	1	0	1	4	3	3
Riversdale	2	1	0	1	3	2	3
South Caulfield	2	1	0	1	7	8	3
Nth Sunshine Eagles	2	1	0	1	5	7	3

DIVISION 2 SOUTH-EAST - ROUND 2

Clayton 2 - Dandenong Inter 0
Brandon Park 0 - Noble Park 2
Newborough/Yallourn 1 - Doveton 1
Heatherton United 2 - Monash University 1
Braeside United 0 - Waverley Wanderers 1
Dingley City 2 - Ashburton 1

Waverley Wanderers	2	2	0	0	5	0	6
Clayton	2	2	0	0	4	1	6
Dingley City	2	2	0	0	4	2	6
New'gh/Yallourn	2	1	1	0	3	2	4
Doveton	2	1	1	0	2	1	4
Noble Park	2	1	0	1	3	2	3
Ashburton	2	1	0	1	5	5	3

ROUND 3 FIXTURES

Sunday April 25

Ivanhoe United v Beaumaris
Endeavour Hills v Newport United
Noble Park United v Rowville Eagles
Thornbury United v Collingwood City
Old Camberwell Grammar v North Caulfield
Parkmore v Moreland United

Heatherton United	2	1	0	1	2	5	3
Monash University	2	0	0	2	2	4	0
Braeside United	2	0	0	2	1	3	0
Dandenong Inter	2	0	0	2	3	6	0
Brandon Park	2	0	0	2	0	3	0

DIVISION 3 NORTH-WEST - ROUND 2

Saturday April 24

Waverley Wanderers v Dingley City
Monash University v Braeside United
Doveton v Heatherton United
Noble Park v Newborough/Yallourn
Ashburton v Clayton
Dandenong Inter v Brandon Park

Monbulk	2	0	1	1	4	6	1
Templestowe Eagles	2	0	0	2	3	6	0
Dandenong	2	0	0	2	2	5	0
Springvale Condors	2	0	0	2	1	7	0

ROUND 3 FIXTURES

Saturday April 24

Sydenham Park v Mitcham United
South Caulfield v Springvale Condors
Morwell Pegasus v Monbulk
Endeavour United v North Sunshine Eagles
Riversdale v Dandenong
Brunswick City v Templestowe Eagles

Whittlesea United	2	2	0	0	4	1	6
Keilor United	2	1	1	0	6	3	4
North Reservoir	2	1	1	0	2	0	4
West Preston	2	1	1	0	5	4	4
Watsonia Heights	2	1	1	0	5	4	



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By Graham Cooke

WE WUZ ROBBED! SERMANNI PLANS BRIGHT FUTURE

A controversial 90th minute penalty gave Belconnen United its second win over Capital City Suns in four days on Thursday night.

The award, after referee Ben Wilson judged goalkeeper Anthony Giannasca to have fouled Peter Farrelly, resulted in United completing a 3-2 win and left Suns officials fuming. "It was an unfair result," said coach Bill Dojcinoski.

Even Belconnen team boss Lino Fiorese was subdued in describing the incident. "I wasn't too sure about it," he said.

"Peter had the ball and Tony came in behind him. It's a bit unfortunate but it's the referee's decision. I felt we should have had a penalty earlier, but he didn't give it."

It was a game which Belconnen, still in a rebuilding process after losing four of last season's championship-winning line-up, was often on the back foot. It fell behind in the 24th minute when veteran Tony Lemezina, playing with some of his old flair and vision, laid a fine pass in the path of Gus Cerro, who scored.

Both sides were not afraid to try their luck in front of goal, but the finishing was uniformly woeful until the 71st minute when a fine move begun by defender Jason Dunn led to United's equaliser.

Dunn's long pass found Scott Manson wide on the left, and the midfielder drove his pass into the penalty area for Craig Unwin to score.

And it was Unwin again seven minutes later, this time finishing from a pass served up by Matt Whyte.

Two minutes later Tim Francis received a yellow card for bringing down Lemezina some 35 metres out from goal. With the Belconnen defence having plenty of time to organise the danger seemed remote, but Cerro had other ideas, sending his free kick on to the head of Peter Romanuk who looped it over Mark Smith into the net.

The penalty, converted by Manson, sent Belconnen into the semi-final and left the Suns to ponder the injustices of football.

Fiorese said he believed his team deserved the win. "We had far more chances than the Suns, but we were

not taking them, especially in the first half," he said.

The previous Sunday Gungahlin Juventus had scrambled a point with a late equaliser against Monaro in the first round of the premiership — on Thursday night there was no such reprieve when the clubs met again in the quarter final of the Federation Cup.

True, Juventus did make another spirited comeback to snatch a goal in its 2-1 loss, but coach Billy Wilcox summed the game up when he said: "We were beaten by the better side on the night. Our first-half performance was dreadful, and we were chasing the game after that."

Two goals in the first 18 minutes sealed the contest, the first coming after just eight minutes from the busy little midfielder Lazar Simeonov, taking on and beating his defender with a neat body swerve before placing his shot wide of goalkeeper Elias Oikarinen.

The second was the most spectacular of the night, striker Joe Campagna, sensing that Oikarinen had strayed too far off his line, sent in a 35 metre shot which dipped perfectly over the goalkeeper's head into the net.

Such a spectacular exhibition of football should have inspired Monaro — instead it went into its shell. Danny Macor remained a constant threat to the Juventus defence, and appeared to have earned his side a third goal when Craig Rankine pushed him over in the penalty area.

Simeonov took the penalty kick, but Oikarinen judged the flight of the ball and pushed it round the post.

It was stoppage time at the end of the game before Juventus got on the score sheet, Oscar Zamora's cross being headed home by George Cattanach.

Even at this late stage it might have saved the game, as less than a minute late goalkeeper Tony Guarino saved a shot from substitute Daniel Byrne with his legs, but extra time would have been an imposition on a clearly superior Monaro.

The coach says some money has been set aside for new players — "not as much as I would like, but given the financial circumstances the club finds itself in, more than I had expected."

He has his targets — one could be Canberra-produced midfielder Andy Ravanell who has spent the last year playing in Scotland and France. John Koch, now playing in the NSW Superleague is another target, as is Paul Dee, who turned out in the first three seasons for the Cosmos before quitting the club last year.

Sermanni stresses these are only possibilities. "I haven't talked to them yet, but they certainly figure in my thoughts," he said.

"The pressure is on to make the right decisions. Even with a team at the bottom of the league there are

Olympic's Eli Salloom is a player who figures in Canberra Cosmos coach Tom Sermanni's plans for the future — but the young defender may have to be patient.

"Salloom came to us for training during the season, and I liked the look of him," Sermanni said. "He is back with Olympic now, but I will certainly be keeping an eye on him during the winter."

However Cosmos has contractual obligations to five other local players, originally signed by former coach Rale Basic, who the club may be forced to bring back into its squad. Sermanni says if this is the case, it will limit his options for the 1999-00 season.

"Obviously my main priority is the immediate strengthening of the side — and this can't be done by signing inexperienced youngsters, it is not fair to the club or to them," he said

"So as regards more local players coming into the squad, it will be very competitive, and some who might otherwise be considered will have to wait a while."

That does not mean to say he will not be haunting the local grounds over the winter, laying down his long-term plans. Despite a disastrous spell in the Ericsson Cup, which has seen the Cosmos finish bottom in three of the four seasons it has so far contested, the club is still looking to a brighter future.

The coach says some money has been set aside for new players — "not as much as I would like, but given the financial circumstances the club finds itself in, more than I had expected."

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TOPLICA POPOVICH THE COSMOS DEFENDER HAS ANOTHER YEAR TO RUN ON HIS CONTRACT

plenty who want to try and break in.

I could have 50 trying out, the trick is to pick the right three or four."

Of the current squad, defender Toplica Popovich, reserve goalkeeper Grant Barlow, and defenders Ilya Prenzski and David Arranz have a second year to run on their contracts. There will be a priority on re-signing Olyroo striker Peter Buljan and Young Socceroo midfielder Lindsay Wilson.

Sermanni says he wants to keep attacking midfielder Ivo De Jesus who came to the club on trial half-way through the season and also believes there is a future for goalkeeper Vilson Kaezevic.

"To tell you the truth, I had not heard too many good reports about him before I came to the club, and his first couple of performances were a bit iffy," he said.

"But more recently he has been in outstanding form, he is a good trainer and has the attitude of a winner."

"Where this club has let him down is by not giving him access to a first-class goalkeeper coach who can improve his technique."

"It's something for us to work on."

"Both teams tried to play open football, and I think we are both trying to do the right thing by introducing younger players."

His opposite number, Bill Dojcinoski, said the Suns should have wrapped the game up in the first half. "But in the end I am happy with the two points," he said. "Next week is another game."

Former Weston Creek striker Peter Hader, back from a spell in Europe, was a major contributor to his side's win, scoring the opening goal against Olympic, and playing a strong supporting role up front as Steve Lazzari added two more.

Coach Jimmy Bland said he had ordered his players to put pressure on their opponents in Olympic's half of the field, not allowing them to engage in their usual steady build up.

"The aim was to deny them their usual game, and we were successful in that," he said.

Belconnen coach Lino Fiorese said his team was good "only in patches" against Juventus, despite its 5-2 margin. "Some teams would have punished us for the way we played today," he said.

Juventus scored first through Oscar Zamora, but United had fought back into a 2-1 lead by half time.

When Juventus' Finnish-born goalkeeper, Elias Oikarinen, was sent off for handling the ball outside the penalty area, the match seemed all over. Instead Lou Gaspari snatched an equaliser.

But it was only delaying the end, and United dominated the final third of the game, rattling up the winning margin. Its scorers were Matt Whyte 3, Damien Tunney and Luke Larfield.

In other matches, newly-promoted Burns Club achieved its first win in Premier League football by beating University of Canberra 2-0. Josh Turco, with a flying header, and Andrew Wallace were its scorers.

And Queanbeyan City, a 6-1 loser against the University last week, went down to an even heavier loss, 7-0 to Monaro in the Queanbeyan derby at Riverside. For Monaro Lazar Simeonov and Danny Macor both notched hat-tricks with Jimmy Baxter completing the scoring.

ACT PREMIER LEAGUE

Division 1

	P	W	S	D	L	F	A	Pts
Monaro	7	Queanbeyan City	0					
Canberra Olympic	0	Weston Creek Royals	3					
University of Canberra	0	Burns Club	2					
Canberra Deakin	2	Capital City Suns	2					
Belconnen United	3	Gungahlin Juventus	2					
Belconnen United	2	White Eagles	2	0	0	6	2	6
Weston Creek Royals	2	2	0	0	4	0	6	
Monaro	2	1	1	0	0	8	1	5
University of Canberra	2	1	0	0	1	6	3	3
Canberra Olympic	2	1	0	0	1	3	3	3
Burns Club	2	1	0	0	1	2	3	3
Canberra Deakin	2	0	1	0	2	2	3	2
Capital City Suns	2	0	1	0	1	2	3	2
Gungahlin Juventus	2	0	1	0	1	3	6	2
Queanbeyan City	2	0	0	0	2	1	13	0

Under 23s: Belconnen United 5 Gungahlin Juventus 3, University of Canberra 1 Burns Club 0, Canberra Deakin 3 Capital City Suns 6, Canberra Olympic 2, Weston Creek Royals 1, Queanbeyan City 0, Monaro 19.

Points: Monaro 6, University of Canberra 6, Belconnen United 6, Canberra Olympic 5, Weston Creek Royals 3, Capital City Suns 3, Burns Club 2, Gungahlin Juventus 0, Canberra Deakin 0, Queanbeyan City 0.

Under 19s: Belconnen United 2 Gungahlin Juventus 1, University of Canberra 3 Burns Club 0, Canberra Deakin 3 Capital City Suns 1, Canberra Olympic 2, Weston Creek Royals 5, Queanbeyan City 3, Monaro 4.

Points: Belconnen United 6, Weston Creek 6, University of Canberra 6, Burns Club 3, Gungahlin Juventus 3, Monaro 3, Canberra Deakin 3, Queanbeyan City 0, Canberra Olympic 0, Capital City Suns 0.

Division 2

	P	W	S	D	L	F	A	Pts
Defence Academy	0	White Eagles	2					
ANU	5	Canberra Defence	0					
Belwest	2	Tuggeranong United	4					
O'Connor Knights	2	Cooma	0					
	P	W	S	D	L	F	A	Pts
O'Connor Knights	2	2	0	0	5	0	6	
Tuggeranong United	2	2	0	0	7	3	6	

Sunday, April 25

Burns v Monaro

Greenway

Queanbeyan City v Belconnen Utd

Riverside

Canberra Olympic v Canb Deakin

O'Connor

Weston Creek Royals v Uni of Can.

Woden Park

Gungahlin Juventus v Capital City Suns

Jameson

First Grade 2pm, Under 23s noon, Under 19s 10am

Belconnen United are back on top of the ACT Premier League after two rounds, but right up with them are the surprise team of the league so far, Weston Creek Royals.

United glided past Gungahlin Juventus 5-2 to add to the points gained from the hard-fought season opener with Capital City Suns; Royals, winner over Canberra Deakin by the only goal of the game last

week, provided the season's biggest upset by beating Canberra Olympic, many people's pre-season choice for the championship, 3-0.

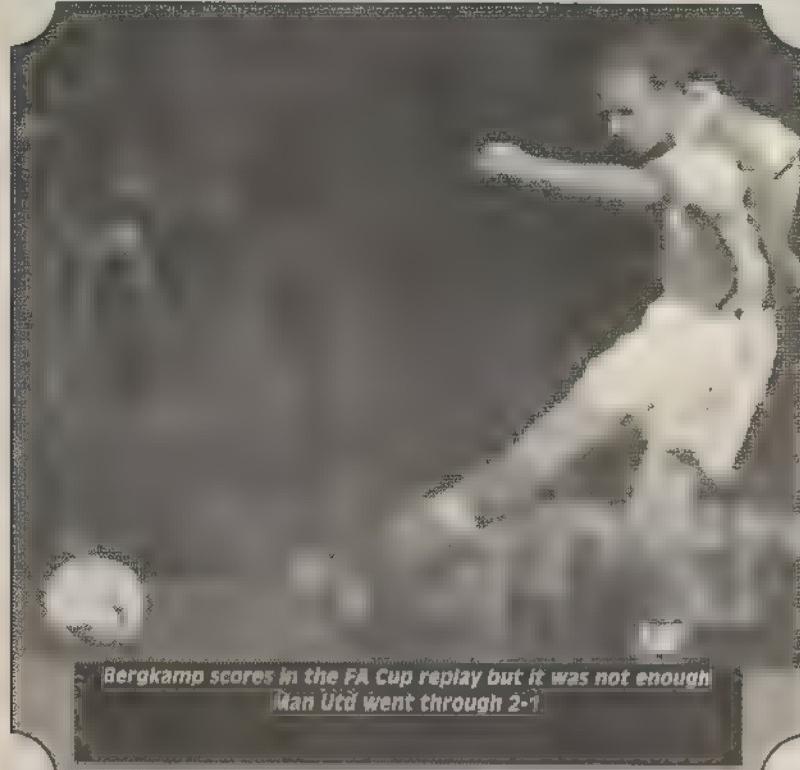
Deakin and the Suns opened their accounts for the season with a 2-2 draw at Deakin Oval — a fair result for two clubs seeking a better future after disappointments in 1998.

While both had newcomers on display, the early attention was directed at two miscreant stars of former days. David Milin (Deakin) and Tony Lemezina (Suns) turned up just minutes before the kick off — with identical claims that their cars had broken down.

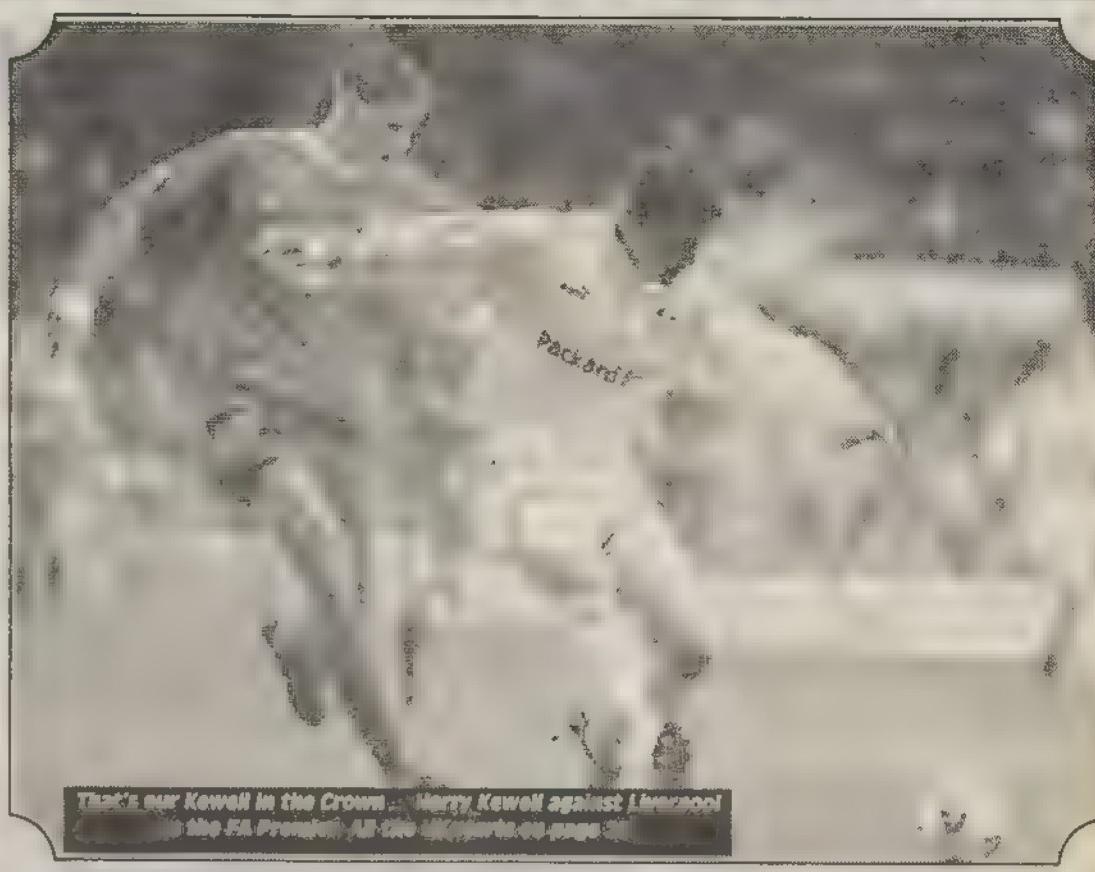
Their penalties were also identical: Relegation to the bench, although both later came on to play significant roles in the game.

The Suns struck first. With 19 minutes gone Gus Cerro landed a corner

THE WEEK IN THE GLOBAL GAME SPONSORED BY THE FOUR DIEGOS RADIO SHOW AND ADELAIDE'S COAST FM SOCCER



Bergkamp scores in the FA Cup replay but it was not enough
Man Utd went through 2-1



TACKLE DOWN Kewell in the Crown - Harry Kewell against Liverpool
in the FA Premiership (AP Wirephoto via AP Wirephoto via AP Wirephoto)



Batistuta scores for Fiorentina against Parma in the Italian Cup
Italy's best striker claims another hat-trick in the Italian Cup final



Crespo after scoring his hat-trick

ITALY

LAZIO WOBBLING AS AC MILAN LOOMS LARGE

This season's Serie A is the most intriguing in years. Lazio were beaten by Juve 3-1 and AC Milan now are looking menacing.

While Lazio was helping Juventus by committing a series of naive defensive errors, third-place Fiorentina wasted a chance to gain ground and lost to Bologna 3-0.

At night, Parma settled for a 1-1 draw against relegation battler Sampdoria of Genoa.

Lazio stayed at 56 points, four ahead of AC Milan, which has a game in hand. Fiorentina has 51 points and Parma 49.

Milan can cut Lazio's lead to one point with five games to go by beating Udinese on Sunday.

"It's a tough moment, and today we had a lot of bad luck," Lazio coach Sven Goran Eriksson said. "Right now we need optimism, work and concentration. And remember that we are still first, no matter what happens at Udine tomorrow. And if we play the way we did [early in the game] today, then we still can win the title."

None of the league's top four clubs has taken charge down the stretch. Lazio, Fiorentina and Parma are a combined 0-4-5 the past three weeks, and Milan has won just one of its last four games.

JUVENTUS 3, LAZIO 1

Juventus has long been out of the running for what would be a third consecutive league championship, but tuned up for tomorrow night's Champions Cup semifinal against

Manchester United with a dominating performance before 65,000 at rain-soaked Olympic Stadium.

With an eye to the European cup outing, Juventus rested French midfielders Zinedine Zidane and Didier Deschamps. Lazio, meanwhile, was without captain Alessandro Nesta and its three other starting defenders — all suspended.

The absences hurt the hosts most. Henry, a French winger, opened the scoring in the 34th minute, turning fill-in defender Attilio Lombardo before firing from 20 yards out. Lazio keeper Luca Marchegiani was well-positioned to grab the shot, but the slick ball went through his hands.

Another mistake allowed the visitors to go up 2-0 in first-half injury time.

Midfielder Alessio Tacchinardi lobbed a pass over the Lazio defence and no one marked strik-

er Nicola Amoruso, who chipped the ball past a charging Marchegiani.

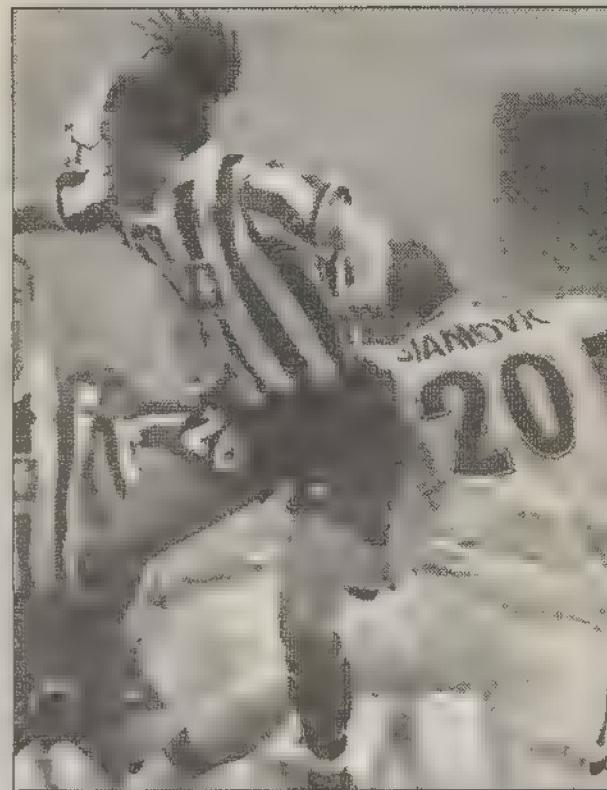
Veteran Roberto Mancini, a halftime substitute, cut the deficit for Lazio by heading home a corner kick in the 56th, but Henry struck again eight minutes later.

Dutch midfielder Edgar Davids forced Marchegiani to make a diving save on a low free kick from 18 yards out, and Henry beat four defenders to the loose ball and slotted it in from close range.

Christian Vieri was Lazio's best threat in attack, but the Italy forward sent shots off a post in the third minute and the crossbar in the 89th.

In its quest for its first title since 1974, Lazio has tough games left against Fiorentina, Parma, Udinese and Bologna, as well as this week's match at Sampdoria.

Lazio saw its 17-game undefeated streak end in last week's 3-1 loss to cross-city rival AS Roma.



Edgar Davids and Dejan Stankovic in the crucial Serie A game between Juve and Lazio. The Turin side won 3-1

carded soon after the final goal for a heavy tackle on Kolyvanov.

Bologna hosts France's Marseille in a UEFA Cup semifinal second-leg tonight.

PARMAS SAMPDORIA

At Parma, where Sampdoria has won just once in 10 outings, Vincenzo Montella fired in a penalty kick after strike partner Francesco Palmieri was hauled down by keeper Gianluigi Buffon in the 54th minute, equalizing for the visitors.

Argentine defender Nestor Sensini registered his first goal of the season in the 43rd to put Parma ahead, but the club saw its winless slide reach four games.

In Bologna, where Fiorentina hadn't lost since 1990, Russian strikers Igor Simutenkov and Igor Kolyvanov replaced Giuseppe Signori and Kennet Andersson in the starting lineup and each scored, while defender Stefano Bettarini added his first career goal in his 60th game.

Simutenkov stole Pasquale Padalino's sloppy

back-pass and drove the ball home from 3 yards

in the 27th minute. Bettarini ran on to slam in

the ball after the wall of Fiorentina defenders

blocked a free kick in the 62nd, and Kolyvanov

sealed the win with a goal in the 68th.

Fiorentina defender Giulio Falcone was red

Zizi tops Real's shopping list

Zidane to McManaman? Could happen. Real Madrid president Lorenzo Sanz said on Friday his club has been offered unseated Juventus midfield star Zidane — and the Spanish giant has signed him at the end of the season.

Zidane was quoted this week as saying he wants to move from Italy to Spain because his Andalucia-born wife was homesick.

The French World Cup hero could be wearing the white of Real next season.

We asked after Zidane's condition before the weekend, but Sanz was quoted as saying by Spanish

sports daily AS: "We like the idea of bringing him in."

"At the end of this season we are going to sign new players. We have the money available and there will be transfers."

Sanz has promised a Real revolution at the close of the current campaign, which has seen the club struggle in the league and exit the European Cup at the quarterfinal stage.

Davor Suker and Christian Panucci are expected to be gone as the club undergoes yet another search for the right players.

That's the right player.

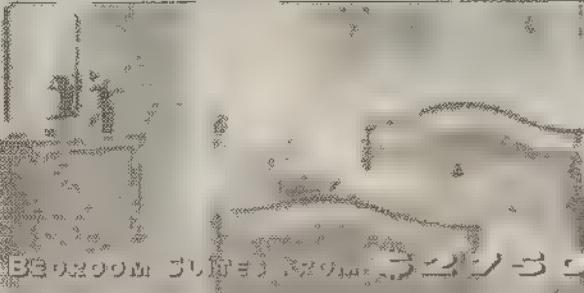


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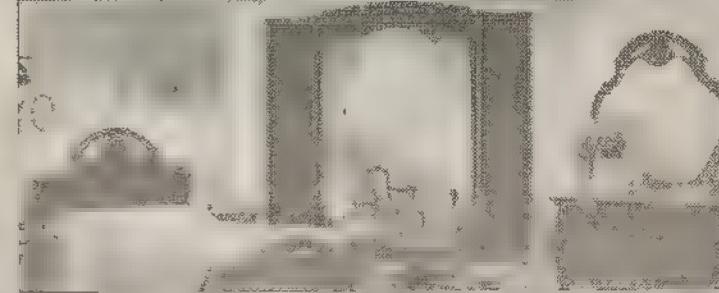
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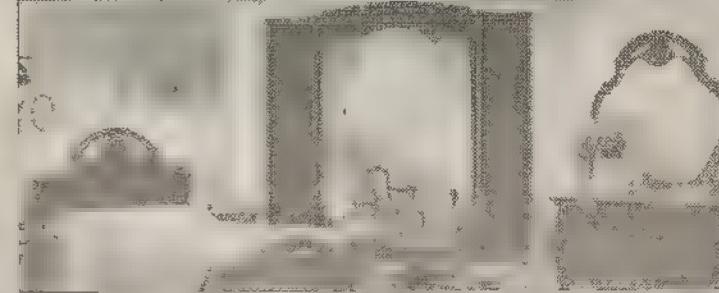


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EUROPE

MIDWEEK FRENCH

Marseille thrashes Nancy to go top

Marseille reclaimed the top spot in the French first division after they thrashed Nancy 4-0 on Thursday. The win came despite the handicap of being forced to play in Montpellier.

Marseille, banned from playing in their own Velodrome because of crowd trouble in the game against Auxerre earlier this year, had to win to take over from Girondins Bordeaux who were held to a goalless home draw by Lorient on Wednesday.

The former European champions can thank Titi Camara for the victory as the Guinean international expected to join Liverpool next season, inspired two of the three goals scored in the second half.

For the first, in the 57th minute, he combined with Florian Maurice who set up Jocelyn Gourvennec to score.

Five minutes later, Camara crossed for Italian international Fabrizio Ravanello to score his 13th of the season from close range.

Maurice drew level with him in the goalscoring rankings when he sealed

victory with the fourth goal 11 minutes from time.

Young Brazilian defender Edson Da Silva, 19, had broken the deadlock on the half hour with a brilliant volley.

The win, which put Marseille on 64 points to the 63 of Bordeaux, was a morale booster ahead of this week's UEFA Cup semi final second leg against Bologna.

Coach Rolland Courbis rested a number of key players, such as playmaker Robert Pires ahead of tonight's tie in Italy. The first leg in Marseille ended in a goalless draw.

Juergen Klinsmann has invited old rival Lothar Matthaeus to his farewell match in Stuttgart next month but only as a spectator.

Matthaeus, 38, is still playing but newly retired 34-year-old Klinsmann, his teammate in West Germany's 1990 World Cup winning side, decided the Bayern Munich sweeper could not take the field — a decision that may be due to the well-documented tension that soured relations between the two.



notably during their days together at Bayern.

Klinsmann's decision not to pick any current German internationals may have something to do with the fact that the German football federation organised a farewell match for Matthaeus but not for him.

The match will feature "VfB All Stars" — all former Stuttgart players — against Juergen's Dream Team.

Part of the funds raised will go towards the refugees in Kosovo, which is par for the course for Klinsmann, who has many charities in which he is involved with.

RAUL UNDER REAL PRESSURE FROM TOSH

In a dramatic announcement sure to send shockwaves through the ranks at Real Madrid, coach John Toshack has told his players they have two months to get it right or get out.

Real's hopes of claiming the Spanish League title were shattered when they were crushed 5-1 by Celta Vigo, slipping to fifth place in the table.

The Welsh coach, furious with the performance of some of his star players, warned of a big-name clear-out at the end of the season.



Davor Suker
Will he be one the Real Madrid players looking for a new club next season?

"The players have got two months to demonstrate the desire needed to keep playing for this club," Toshack warned.

"Several returned from international duty last weekend and hardly touched the ball. They haven't shown the attitude I want."

Toshack, who replaced Dutchman Guus Hiddink in February, insists that no one at Real is untouchable, and that includes brilliant striker Raul, who has scored 19 goals this term.

Toshack has already relegated club captain Manuel Sanchis to the subs bench.

One player almost certain to leave at the end of the season is Davor Suker. The highly-rated Croatian international was linked this week with a move to Panathinaikos.

Ajax defender Mario Melchiot, who on Wednesday scored the winning goal in Ajax's 2-1 Cup semi final victory over Feyenoord, is being released at the end of the season. The club will also let go fellow-defender Kofi Mensah as of July 1, Ajax spokesman Erik van Leeuwen told Reuters. "It's the policy of our trainer Jan Wouters decides upon these matters and he has apparently decided not to go ahead with either of them," Van Leeuwen said.

ZIDANE IN SPAIN? ZIZI THINKING OF MOVE

Zinedine Zidane, France's World Cup hero, is rumoured to be leaving Italian club Juventus at the end of the season. The destination for the world footballer of the year is said to be Spain.

In an interview published in *La Repubblica* newspaper on Tuesday, Zidane said his Spanish wife was tired of living in the northern industrial city of Turin and wanted to return to her home country.

"My contract is good until 2004 but I would like to play in Spain where my wife and parents are from," he told the paper. "My family is my main priority and if my family is unhappy in Turin I have to say so, because



that's the reality."

"For now I am with Juventus — for now," he said. "At the end of the season I will have to talk to management and to my wife."

Zidane, who scored twice in France's 3-0 World Cup

final defeat of Brazil, declined to confirm the reported interest of Spanish giants Real Madrid and Atletico Madrid.

Other big clubs including Manchester United, who face Juventus in Turin in the second leg of a European Cup semi final tomorrow night, have also been reported as interested although Zidane's wife may not want to swap Turin for Manchester.

Juventus director general Luciano Moggi said last week that Zidane was not for sale and that he would be at the centre of the club's plans next season.

Coach Carlo Ancelotti has also said he wants to keep "Zizou" at the Delle Alpi stadium next year.

"Zidane is important to this side whether we play a 4-4-2 formation, 4-3-3 or 8-1-1," Ancelotti said at the weekend.

Zidane, who was rested by Ancelotti in Juventus' visit to Lazio at the weekend due to a right knee injury, said he was confident Juve would beat United.

"Juventus can still play incredible matches," he said, referring to the Turin side's superb performance in their 1-1 draw at Old Trafford in the first leg. "The cup is within our reach."

Zidane is also one of the world stars believed to be playing in the FIFA All Stars game against the Socceroos on June 12.

UEFA have announced that Europe's top soccer nations will participate in this summer's less than prestigious Intertoto Cup. Greece and Portugal are yet to confirm their par-

ticipation in the competition, which sees the top seeded clubs from the top eight seeded countries entering the tournament in the third round.

A total of 40 clubs will play in the first round on the weekends of June 19-20 and June 26-27.

The 20 winners from those ties will be joined by 12 of the 20 seeded teams for the second round, which takes place July 3-4 and July 10-11.

The 16 winners will be joined by the eight top seeded teams for the third round which features a first leg on July 17-18 and the return leg on July 24.

The subsequent 12 winners will then take part in "semifinals" on July 28 and August 4 with the six survivors meeting each other on August 10 and

24

The three winners of those matches will gain a place in the UEFA Cup.

Teams from Italy, Spain, France, Germany, Netherlands, England, Turkey and Austria will be seeded.

Greece and Portugal, who would have had seeded teams, have decided not to enter.

The draw for the competition, made on Thursday, offers a relatively easy passage for a major club to reach the UEFA Cup by the back entrance.

England's top seeded competitor, for example, would face the winner of a series of matches involving teams from Wales, Malta, Finland or Estonia to enter the "semifinal" round of 12.

Compiled by

EUROPE

EURO LEAGUES WRAP

Barcelona struggled but finally overcame a doughty Mallorca 2-1 to keep their title hopes alive, yet it was not a completely convincing display. Louis van Gaal's side, leading 2-0 through first half goals from Frank de Boer and Patrick Kluivert, were almost denied victory at the death as Philip Cocu conceded a penalty for handball in the final minute.

The Dutch midfielder received the red card, Leonardo Biagioni netted the spot kick and Barcelona had to survive three tortuous minutes of injury time.

Mallorca, with half an eye on Thursday's European Cup Winners' Cup semifinal decider with Chelsea, looked to play a cautious game, packing the midfield and attempting to deny space to Rivaldo and Luis Figo.

But the islanders were undone as early as the fourth minute when their much-vaunted defence went to sleep.

A short corner on the left led to a dinked cross and an unmarked Frank de Boer nodded home.

Mallorca had most of the possession throughout the first half but they struggled to create worthwhile chances, with the highly rated Dani Garcia anonymous up front.

And one foray forward led to Barcelona's second, from a classic counter-attacking move on 22 minutes.

Pep Guardiola, the artful Barcelona midfielder, fed the ball out to Luis Figo on the right and the Portuguese forward, in full flight, picked out Patrick Kluivert with a pinpoint cross.

The Dutch striker slotted the ball in for his 11th goal of the season.

Kluivert looked to have added a third 10 minutes before halftime but his tap in, following a fumble from Carlos Roa, was adjudged offside.

The second half followed a similar pattern, with Mallorca passing the ball around nicely but Barcelona threatening on the break.

Luis Enrique came close on the hour mark after a neat pass from Rivaldo while Kluivert was a constant danger.

That was before a mistake by keeper Ruud Hesp sparked the drama at the end that nearly gave the chasing pack hope.

In Saturday's other game Valladolid added to the woes of Atletico Madrid with a 1-0 victory, Victor Fernandez bagging the decider on 56 minutes.

Atletico travel to Turin tonight to try and turn around a 3-1 defeat from the home leg of their UEFA Cup semifinal.

Two goals in the last two minutes of extra-time gave French champions RC Lens a 2-0 League Cup semi-final win over Sochaux and revived their hopes of competing in the UEFA Cup next season.

Out of contention in the first division title chase, ousted from the French Cup, Lens have no other choice but winning the League Cup to keep their European dreams alive.

In the final at the Stade de France next month, they will meet Metz or Montpellier in what is shaping as a great final for the football purists.

The victory was hard fought as the northern team, who dominated throughout, had to wait for the 118th minute to see playmaker Daniel Moreira break the deadlock from a cross by defender Cyril Rool.

BLATTER HITS OUT AT ALLEGATIONS

FIFA president Sepp Blatter says he has nothing to hide in the aftermath of a book alleging dirty dealings.

The author David Yallop claimed in a book published last year in a number of languages but not in English, that Blatter paid \$50,000 to selected delegates on the eve of last year's FIFA presidential election to secure the necessary votes for victory.

Blatter has obtained an injunction against the book - entitled "How They Stole The Game" - which prevents it being published in his native Switzerland where FIFA has its headquarters.

The book has so far been published in Germany, the Netherlands, Austria, Brazil and Japan.

Blatter gave an invited round-table of journalists on Friday his version of events leading up to his victory by 111 votes to 80 over UEFA president Lennart Johansson of Sweden in the FIFA election last June.

Blatter said that \$50,000 was given to a number of delegates in Paris but that the money was an advance on FIFA funding provided to each national association.

Every association is entitled to \$1.0 million from FIFA over a four-year period from 1998-2002 as part of the revenue earned by FIFA from the World Cup.

That works out at \$250,000 a year - and some associations were given a share of that money in Paris.

However, Blatter said, all the money was accounted for and each association has a responsibility to advise FIFA how it was spent.

Blatter said: "No money was paid but to anyone without a project being presented, whether it was transportation for a youth team, setting up an office or buying a fax machine."

"No money went into anyone's pockets. If we find out it did, all future assistance will be stopped."

He also explained that a new procedure for distributing FIFA funds was agreed by the



Three goals from gun-striker Ulf Kirsten helped Bayer Leverkusen hammer crisis-hit Borussia Moenchengladbach 4-1 in the German first division.

The victory enabled Leverkusen to consolidate their second place by stretching their lead on third-placed Kaiserslautern to six points.

Last year's champions were beaten 2-1 by Hansa Rostock on Friday.

With runaway leaders Bayern Munich virtually certain to take the title, interest focuses on the battle between Leverkusen and Kaiserslautern for the second spot and the direct access to the Champions' League that goes with it.

Kirsten had four chances in the match and converted three in the 14th, 54th and 67th minutes.

Germany head coach Erich Ribbeck, who was in the stands and will this week name his team for a friendly against Scotland on April 28, could only be impressed.

The Leverkusen marksman, who ended the last two seasons as the Bundesliga's most prolific scorer, now has 16 goals to his credit.

Leverkusen midfielder Carsten Ramelow completed Saturday's demolition with a goal in the 78th minute.

Once mighty Moenchengladbach, who stay bottom with almost all hope gone of escaping relegation, scored through Swedish striker Jorgen Petersson in the 65th minute.

"We played better and better," said Leverkusen coach

Christoph Daum. "I am confident we can hold on to second place."

Bayern Munich warmed up for tomorrow night's European Cup semifinal return leg at home to Dynamo Kiev in ideal fashion by beating strugglers Eintracht Frankfurt 3-1 on Friday.

There was plenty of action in Bochum, where VfB Stuttgart opened up a 3-0 lead thanks to Nigerian Jonathan Akpoborie, who struck in the 42nd, 45th and 53rd minutes.

But VfL Bochum recovered to grab a 3-3 draw.

Stuttgart keeper Franz Wohlfahrt helped them fight back when he brought down midfielder Andreas Zeyer in the box in the 60th minute.

Wohlfahrt was sent off and Iranian Mehdi Mahdavikia converted the resulting penalty. Striker Kai Michalke scored the home side's second goal in the 78th minute before South African Delron Buckley levelled from close range with 10 minutes left.

"The referee was wrong to send me off," said Wohlfahrt. "Zeyer fell deliberately."

Television replays seemed to show the Austrian veteran was probably right.

That's football for you Franz.

as his allegations would damage England's bid to host the 2006 World Cup finals.

He also claimed that the British bid was doomed because FIFA wanted the finals to be held in Africa.

Yallop said: "We are not going to get 2006. We know that," adding that Britain would be wasting a lot of money in pursuing a bid which was going to fail.

"It would be much better giving the money to hospitals, schools and the unemployed," he said.

Alec McGivan, director of England's campaign to stage the 2006 finals, dismissed Yallop as a "publicity-seeker who is out of touch with reality."

McGivan said: "Mr Yallop doesn't know what he is talking about. The question of the publication of his book in England has nothing to do with the British Government, the FA, or the England 2006 World Cup campaign."

The truth is he is just generating publicity for a book which he is trying to get published.

As far as the World Cup bid is concerned he is clearly out of touch. England are leading the race at the moment. Africa and Brazil know.

ENGLAND'S KEEGAN STILL SAYS FULHAM IS NO. 1 PRIORITY

Fulham coach Kevin Keegan, still celebrating his team's promotion, has spoken out on the most talked about topic in English football recently—the top job as national team manager.

Amid the euphoria of Fulham's promotion success, he paused to answer soccer's biggest question in the same way nearly every fan would too. He declared that club comes before country.

Well, be honest with yourself, it does, doesn't it?

But Keegan is the only man in England who actually has to make that choice. While the country urges him to take charge of the national team his heart-strings tie him ever more tightly to the club he is re-building and re-vitalising.

Keegan said: "England have just 12 games a year and other managers have said they miss the day-to-day involvement. I would as well. I enjoy working with players and I have to feel excited every day to do the job."

"It's still an adventure at Fulham, I'm still getting something from it everyday. The club is in my blood."

"It was difficult at first, taking over from Micky Adams who had won promotion from Division Three and it was difficult to appoint a manager. But winning promotion on Tuesday was very special."

"We've broken a few club records. And there's a few still to go before the end of the season."

That's not what the men of the FA want to hear at the moment. He is currently in charge for the friendly in Hungary on April 28 and the Euro 2000 qualifiers with Sweden and Bulgaria in June.

Then he has insisted it's back full-time to Craven Cottage. But you have to be mindful here of Keegan's habit of living for the moment. Come Thursday, when he names his squad for Hungary he'll be nearly as excited as when he was jiggling around the pitch after last week's promotion-clinching win over Gillingham. Which is why there is still a part of everyone—Fulham's fans apart—which believes that he can eventually be tempted away from his cosy riverside home.

Fulham owner Mohamed Al Fayed; the man whose millions are bankrolling the climb towards the big-time, understands the situation perfectly and his club dismissed as 'hearsay' suggestions a new £15,000-a-week contract had been offered to King Kev. Keegan himself said: "People here trust me, but they don't depend on me."

"If Kevin Keegan left this football club at the end of his contract next year Mr Fayed and the people will still be here and there's a club here. They've just got to make the right decision on who they appoint if that happens. I think they will. This



Fulham's Kevin Keegan celebrating his team's promotion with the club's major investor Mohamed Al Fayed

club's changed unbelievably, not just with the playing staff but behind the scenes as well. It all needed doing, because the club just disintegrated and it was only the supporters that kept it alive.

"I don't think it's a massive club. It's not going to be another Manchester United or Newcastle. But it can become a very well run medium-sized club. I would think, you're talking about a West Ham-size. I've ended up coming back in and managing and I've really enjoyed it, mainly because I've been able to get quality players. There were times when I wondered what I was doing, getting on the train at Darlington at 6am, not finishing until 8pm.

"But at least I enjoy it. There are people doing that in jobs they don't enjoy."

While he and the FA ponder the future, perhaps they could also think about a solution to where England play while Wembley is being refurbished. Craven Cottage, anyone?

Ever wondered who's responsible for the astronomical sums of money poured into some of England's clubs? Here's a quick rundown:

Mohamed Al Fayed (Fulham): Investment £60m from 1997 Turnaround: Second Division to First. **Jack Walker (Blackburn):** Investment £100m - first bought shares in the early 80s and increased stake to 99 percent in 1995. Turnaround: First Division to Premiership champions. **Sir Jack Hayward (Wolves):** Investment: £45m from 1990



Turnaround: still in First Division. **Steve Gibson (Middlesbrough):** Investment: £50m from 1993. Turnaround: Twice promoted to Premiership, two League Cup finals, one FA Cup final. **Sir John Hall (Newcastle):** Investment: £100m from 1991 Turnaround: Promotion to Premiership, two FA Cup finals. **Sam Hammam (Wimbledon):** Investment: Paid a total of £70,000 in 1981 to become owner and has made £8m in transfer market since. Turnaround: Promoted through the divisions to the top flight. FA Cup winners 1988. **Sir Elton John (Watford):** Investment: £4m from 1977-87 (in his second spell, from 1997, he has not invested at all) Turnaround: Fourth Division to first FA Cup final 1984.

Wales are still hopeful that their final Euro 2000 qualifier will be played at Ninian Park, Cardiff, early in October as originally scheduled.

Doubts have arisen because the Wales rugby team face Japan in the World Cup in the city's Millennium Stadium on Saturday October 9.

"The police have told us we can't play Switzerland on the same day but, according to the UEFA calendar, we can play on Sunday October 10," said Wales secretary David Collins.

Troubled West Bromwich, whose gate was down to 9,601 for last week's visit of Swindon Town, lost £882,000 in their latest financial half-year.

The operating loss was only £144,000 but the club, who have slumped to 12th in the First Division, opted to write off a number of players' contracts.

Meanwhile, Socceroo Jason Van Blerk is facing an FA disciplinary hearing after being booked for the 11th time against Swindon.

ANOTHER TWIST IN FOWLER STORY

In a stunning reversal of previous reports, Liverpool are now claiming that star striker Robbie Fowler (right), was in fact struck three times by Chelsea's Graeme Le Saux in their infamous Stamford Bridge clash last month.

Fowler was last week banned for six matches — two for his clash with Le Saux and a further four for his cocaine-sniffing celebrations against Everton. Liverpool initially announced they were to appeal against the severity of the punishment but changed their mind when it was pointed out that the ban could be lengthened. But with Liverpool facing a striker crisis now that Michael Owen has been ruled out for the season, they are ready once more to back Fowler to the hilt with a legal appeal.

Liverpool will insist that Le Saux, allegedly the victim of Fowler's gay taunts, escaped lightly after striking

Fowler in a further two incidents not picked up by TV cameras.

The FA have launched a betting inquiry into English football, sparked by the comments of Leeds boss David O'Leary.

O'Leary, who incurred FA wrath after remarking in a TV interview that he had bet £100 on Manchester United to win the title, will be given a friendly warning by John Barnwell, chief of the League Managers Association.

Betting on football is strictly against FA rules, but Barnwell said: "I think the comment was tongue in cheek. It was his way of stressing that United are still favourites. But I'll tell him to be more careful with what he says."

Following some insulting comments about former Vale star Lee Mills published by Port Vale in a programme article, Bradford have asked the English FA to take disciplinary action.

Mills, who made his first return to Vale Park on Tuesday — scoring the equaliser — following a £1m move to Bradford, was described in the article as "jogging around without ever getting involved. His passing was poor and touch awful".

City chairman Geoffrey Richmond said they will demand FA action, for the first time against a programme article, if Mills complains officially.

WORK WITH CRAZY CRAIG WILSON



the office as fast as my leg-irons would carry me and dialled the number of Dwight's publicist, Gemma Pettigrew-Smalbone.

The conversation went something like this:

CRAIG: Gemma?

GEMMA: Hello ?

CRAIG: Hello ?

GEMMA: Hello

CRAIG: Are you there?

GEMMA: I can't hear you.

CRAIG: Hello?

GEMMA: Hello?

CRAIG: Hello Gemma!

GEMMA: Is anybody there?

CRAIG: I'm sorry I can't hear you very well.

CRAIG: It's about Dwight's monkey.

GEMMA: Hello?

CRAIG: Gemma ?

GEMMA: I'm on a mobile. I'll have to call you back.

So there you have it. And people think we have an easy life in the Crazy office.

Michael Jackson was recently in

MILondon to visit Harrods. Mohammed Al Fayed, owner of both Harrods and Fulham FC, somehow persuaded Jacko to attend their match against Wigan.

Wrapped in a black and white scarf, Michael was introduced to the crowd before taking his seat in the directors box, where he and Al Fayed argued about which contained the most plastic: Keegan's wallet or Jackson's face. Kevin Stapleton was sitting just behind them, wondering where Bubbles,

Jacko's simian escort, had got to

He leant forward and whispered

into what was once Michael's ear, but was now

part of his cheek. 'Where's the monkey?' he asked.

Jacko turned to face him, let out a shriek, and raised a white gloved hand to his

surgical mask.

'I gave him the afternoon off. He's gone out

with his mate Brian for the day. I believe they're taking

in the Hartlepool v. Chester game. I do hope he'll be

okay.'



holder Ethel Gadsby had a stroke, though her friend Mabel couldn't quite reach across the barrier.

It was unlikely behaviour from the young Welsh winger, though a rumour has been doing the rounds of the Crazy office that Giggsy was actually doing a tribute to his hirsute compatriot Tom Jones. If you look carefully at the replay you can just see the medallion.

A source that Zbigniew has within the Man United camp tells us the Reds were most embarrassed by ex-player Paddy Crerand on Wednesday. Now a commentator for Greater Manchester Radio, Crerand was clearly unimpressed by the array of foreign talent on display. "It's no wonder the Nazis ran through some of these players' countries when you see the way they defend"; he quipped.

Oh dear Paddy! One of those countries was Holland, home of United tower of strength Jaap Stam.

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SUPPORTERS' CLUBS

Far from home? Homesick without your home team? Soccer Weekly keeps you up to date with your Australian supporters clubs Club: Arsenal Contact: Micky Brock Address: PO Box 56, Kingsway West, NSW 2208.

In common with most of the bigger clubs, there are several Arsenal supporters' groups in Australia. The address above, though it's for the NSW branch, serves as a useful initial contact point if you want to join. There is also a website at <http://mail.iweb.net.au/~arsenal/ozsupclubs.html> which has contact numbers for Gooner fans in all states. We spoke to Micky Brock of the NSW chapter.

"The club was set up in 1988. It was started by like-minded Gooners who wanted to make contact with others in exile. We now have members in New Zealand, Singapore, and in every state in Australia. There are groups in all states too, except the Northern Territory. That's about 700 members."

"Membership costs \$20 a year. We arrange meetings every couple of months. We go wherever takes our fancy, for instance for things like the Cup Final we went to One World Sport in Darling Harbour. Until relatively recently we had an excellent newsletter, one of the best in the country."

"The club keep us in touch with what is going on at Highbury. They're very good. Normally if someone is going across to a game, they'll arrange tickets for them and arrange for them to meet the players. There is a very nice man there called Ken Fryer who liaises with us. When we made Dennis Bergkamp our Player of the Year, we got to present the award to him in the players' tunnel."

"Gordon Nutt, who played for Arsenal in the late fifties, was one of several players who have come out here. He came out to play football but now he lives in Tassie. Charlie George also came out for a while."

Email Crazy Craig at magic sponge@hotmail.com

Compiled by

UK

Soccer Weekly



'WE'VE GOT BOTTLE,' SAYS NEVILLE



Phil Neville warned: "We have got the guts to win the treble." As United prepared to host Sheffield Wednesday in Premiership combat, Neville was convinced the Old Trafford giants can defy the odds by marching to glory in the Premiership, FA Cup and Champions League.

In a rallying cry that will send shivers down the neck of Juventus, Neville added: "We have a maximum of 10 more games and if we can win the lot, the treble is ours."

"Make no mistake about it, that is our aim and we have got the guts to do it."

"Right through our careers, the manager has been drumming it into us about the importance of having bottle."

"You don't get more pressure than we faced with 10 men against Arsenal on Wednesday. But everyone wanted the ball right to the death - that's the mentality and toughness you need to play for Manchester United."

Gerard Houllier has warned his Liverpool stars of a massive crack down on indiscipline. The Anfield manager is ready to introduce a tough new regime at the club, following a series of high-profile incidents in recent weeks.

He will warn every member of the squad that they could be booted out of the club if they step out of line next season. Fowler decided not to appeal against his six-match ban.

He will then start with a clean slate when the new term kicks off in August.



Phil Neville against Peter Atherton. The Reds won 3-0.

The Liverpool striker said he didn't want to upset people any further, following criticism over his drug-taking "joke" in the derby with Everton.

"I think that people have misunderstood what I was trying to do, but I am ready to accept the punishment and get on with it," he said. "I apologised immediately after the Everton game because the last thing I wanted was for anyone to think I was encouraging drug use."

"In fact, I was trying to do exactly the opposite, which was to say: 'Never take drugs'."

Houllier said: "I hope the decision not to appeal is a sign that he has listened to me and that it is the first step to a new maturity."

"Not appealing means that he accepts the penalty he has received, even though I'm sure he has good grounds for the appeal, and we feel it is harsh."

BIG DUNC: 'DOG'S LIFE AT EVERTON'

Duncan Ferguson has come out on the weekend and made some extraordinary claims about his former club, saying that the club's Chairman Peter Johnson treated him like a dog!

Johnson accepted Newcastle's £8million offer for the Scottish striker last November without speaking to the player or even informing manager Walter Smith.

And in the build-up to Everton's vital search for points at St James's Park on the weekend, Ferguson spoke for the first time about the agony of leaving the club he loves.

"I was happy at Everton," he said. "I remember reading someone saying the only thing loyal in football is a dog - well I must have been a dog because I was loyal to Everton and still got sold."

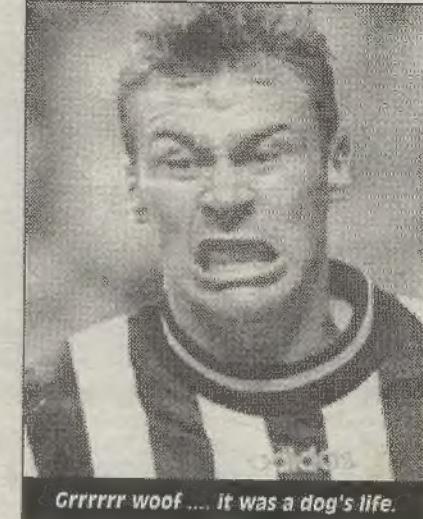
"From the club's point of view it was a bad idea to sell me because they never got the money from the deal to rebuild."

"Maybe me going would have been a good thing for the club if they could have used the money to get two or three quality players in as a springboard to strengthen the team — but that never happened."

"I don't need to score a goal and then turn round and say Everton shouldn't have sold me," he said. "The fact is, they bought me for £4m and sold me for £8m. I wonder how many other signings over the years have brought that return?"

"Everton had four good years out of me and doubled their money. I was happy at Everton. I still have a house in Liverpool and there is still a lot for us down there."

Ferguson was faced with the prospect, should he venture off the bench, of sending his former club closer to the drop. He added: "Yes it would be hard to take if I helped put Everton deeper into trouble. I still have a lot of affection for the club and obviously want



Grrrrr woof ... it was a dog's life.

them to do well, for the fans first and foremost."

"But I need to show the Newcastle fans what I can do because I have been out injured for so long." For Gary Speed, his sudden exit from Everton was equally as painful — but 14 months on he still admires their support.

The Welsh skipper, snapped up for £5.5m by Kenny Dalglish following a fall out with Howard Kendall, said: "I think they have enough about them to stay up."

Will the fans at Goodison go through last year's final day heartaches? We will see, but if they do go down Johnson's role in the Fergie sale will be under even greater scrutiny.



SUNDERLAND BACK IN PREMIER

PETER Reid's Sunderland went to Barnsley and left with the title sewn up. The lads from the Stadium of Light are back in the Premier after a convincing display at Oakwell.

But they had a few anxious moments after Mike Sheron scored his first goal for Barnsley following Craig Hignett's corner after 86 minutes. Those fears were forgotten when Sunderland predator Kevin Phillips got the third in injury time from outside the area - his 23rd goal of the season.

Just two passes swept Sunderland from the edge of their own area to within sight of Tony Bullock's goal. Allan Johnston's clever first-time lay-off in the centre circle, following Chris Makin's clearance, allowed Phillips to out-pace Darren Sheridan.

The leading scorer powered into the penalty area but, to the amazement of Sunderland's army of travelling fans, he dragged his measured shot wide of the far post. Phillips - who scored four against Bury on Tuesday to confirm the inevitability of Sunderland's promotion - was agonisingly close to opening the scoring again in the ninth minute.

Bullock completely misjudged the vicious curl on Johnston's swinging corner and was left grasping at thin air. Only the awareness and bravery of Kevin Richardson's goal-line clearance prevented Phillips adding to his phenomenal strike rate.

Barnsley found it an increasing struggle to contain Sunderland's free-flowing style and only the bravery of Bullock rescued them moments later. Johnston's clever backheel gave Clark the chance to burst into the box after a perfectly worked one-two with Phillips.

But the Barnsley keeper read the situation perfectly, racing from his line

to smother the danger as Clark tried to lift his shot into the far corner. On the rare occasions Barnsley ventured into Sunderland territory it was invariably Craig Hignett who was at the hub of their attacking ideas.

Bruce Dyer was inches away from converting his clever through ball in the 28th minute. And then Sheron wasted another inventive contribution from the former Middlesbrough midfielder, shooting high over Thomas Sorensen's near post from ten yards.

Bullock denied Summerbee with another brave save at the midfielder's feet three minutes from half-time, but Sunderland refused to be denied.

And in almost identical circumstances, Summerbee put them in front seconds before the interval. Michael Gray's deep cross was headed across the edge of the area by Niall Quinn.

That created enough confusion between Scott Jones and Sheridan to allow Summerbee to race in between them and steer his right foot shot beyond Bullock. Sunderland have been by far the most menacing side in the Division all season and they should have wrapped up another comfortable victory within 10 minutes of the restart.

Skipper Kevin Ball was only fractionally wide with a powerful 20 yard shot after Johnson, Quinn and Phillips had combined cleverly to set up the opening. In the 51st minute the tide of Sunderland attacks continued when Ball intercepted Bullock's poor clearance.

The Sunderland's skipper's right knee sent the ball arcing back towards the Barnsley goal and Phillips muscled his way past Moses only to find a shooting opportunity denied him.

But the striker demonstrated his awareness with a beautifully weighted pass into the path of Summerbee, who had raced up to support him.

Summerbee drove his low shot back across the area only to see it finish agonisingly wide of the right hand post. Phillips should have made the championship a formality in the 55th minute but Phillips screwed his shot wide.

But in the 63rd minute Sunderland's championship joy was confirmed when Clark raced from inside his own area to collect a through ball and place his low shot wide of Bullock.

Aussie born Sasa Ilic has revealed for the first time how a collision at Chelsea left him a physical wreck and may have contributed to his loss of form. Charlton's goalkeeper admitted he still suffers dizzy spells six months after the Stamford Bridge horror incident involving Richard Rufus and Pierluigi Casiraghi.

"You can't mess about with the head," said Ilic. "I was out for a month and still feel funny if I get a knock. When I restarted training I felt fine. But I suffered from insomnia and loss of appetite."

"It all contributed to my loss of form. Maybe I came back too early. It takes time to readjust from a knock on the head."

Ilic was a spectator as Charlton battled for their Premiership lives against Leeds. He had just made a comeback when he was carried off for the second time after a spectacular collision with West Ham's Marc Keller on Easter Monday.

With Simon Royce also injured, Aussie Andy Petterson will continue his bid to land a new contract.

Defender David Tuttle will return to Crystal Palace this week. He has played only five minutes for Charlton on loan after damaging ankle ligaments.



THE F.A. PREMIER LEAGUE

Compiled and written by

Daryl Katz

UK

Premier League highlights

SOUTH'TON V BLACKBURN

Southampton and Blackburn Rovers produced a thrilling 3-3 draw at The Dell on Saturday in a match containing positive, attacking football and packed with goalmouth incident.

Blackburn started quickly and a series of corners from Jason Wilcox exposed the vulnerability of the Southampton defence. First, Darren Peacock headed a corner dangerously across goal and then Stephane Henchoz headed down for Kevin Gallacher who failed to force the ball home in a goalmouth scramble.

After 13 minutes, Blackburn winger Keith Gillespie made a surging run and sent a shot just wide from 20 yards as the visitors looked increasingly likely to score.

Southampton responded with a powerful drive from Moroccan Hassan Kachloul, which had Blackburn goalkeeper John Filan scrambling to make a low save.

Seconds later however, Blackburn deservedly took the lead as Ashley Ward ran at the Southampton defence before cutting the ball back across goalkeeper Neil Moss.

The visitors continued to apply pressure, Jason McAtee sending a penetrative cross into the area but finding nobody to force the ball home.

Southampton responded well though, and found the equaliser on 22 minutes when Chris Marsden rose to head home a Scott Hiley cross after good work down the right from Egil Ostenstad.

Rovers were back in front just three minutes later, however. Saints again failed to deal adequately with a Wilcox corner and Peacock forced the ball home at the near post from six yards.

Shortly afterwards, Peacock was the hero at the other end, clearing a Kachloul header off the line from a Le Tissier cross.

Rovers striker Gallacher then fashioned two chances in two minutes just before the half-hour.

He turned well in the area to fashion a shooting chance but sent it across the goal and just wide before heading McAtee's cross wide with the home defence struggling to contain the visitors.

The pace of the game calmed slightly in the minutes leading up to half time, but after the break Blackburn raised the tempo again.

Three minutes after the restart, another dangerous McAtee cross found Wilcox at the near post and he headed powerfully home to secure a two-goal advantage.

Two minutes later, a Wilcox free kick found Ward who turned well but could not keep his shot down.

The home side kept battling though, and almost pulled a goal back as Kachloul headed a cross from substitute James Beattie into the side netting.

Saints found a way back into the game on 62 minutes. Beattie sent in a low cross from the right, and Mark Hughes came charging in to force the ball home from three yards for his long-awaited first Southampton goal.

Sensing that they had thrown themselves a lifeline, the home side threw everything at Rovers in a quest for

a share of the spoils. Hughes almost scored again with a powerful long-range shot which sailed just high and wide.

Twelve minutes from time, a Le Tissier cross found Hughes at the far post but he failed narrowly to find the target with a powerful header.

The home side were pressing desperately now, Hughes and Le Tissier spearheading the chase for an equaliser in an action-packed match.

A series of corners produced a sustained period of pressure and Saints finally drew level four minutes from time.

Beattie rose to nod on a long ball out of defence, finding Latvian substitute Marian Pahars who headed home for a goal on debut.

A dramatic spell of late pressure saw a host of chances come the way of the home side as they pressed for a winner, while Rovers battled desperately to hang on for a point.

The drama never abated in the closing minutes as the home side dominated and the visitors struggled to clear the ball from their penalty area.

Peacock cleared off the line and Carsley smothered a Le Tissier shot before Pahars and Kachloul both forced close range blocks as shots rained in on the Blackburn goal.

One goalmouth scramble followed another as Rovers incredibly managed to survive the fierce onslaught through four agonising minutes of stoppage time.

Rovers eventually hung on grimly for the draw in a relegation battle which had supplied high quality entertainment.

After a superb, open game packed with attractive football and for sheer excitement matching anything on offer this season, both sets of fans must be wondering why they are entrenched in the relegation dogfight.

The result ironically leaves both sides in deep trouble, but both managers will hope that they can reproduce the same urgency in their remaining matches as they attempt to retain their premiership status.



Le Tissier was inspirational as he led his side from two goals down to draw 3-3.

NEWCASTLE V EVERTON

Newcastle skipper Alan Shearer jumps for the ball against Everton's Short.

Croatian Silvio Maric went close to an equaliser seconds later when he broke down the right and fired in a fierce shot which Thomas Myhre did well to turn away.

Francis Jeffers passed up a fine chance to double his side's lead with just six minutes gone when he wasted Hutchison's ball over the top by blasting his shot over the bar.

Alan Shearer almost pulled Newcastle level on 14 minutes when he curled a free-kick only just wide after Scott Gemmill had brought down Temuri Ketsbaia 25 yards out.

It was Maric, however, who was guilty of another bad miss three minutes later. Andy Griffin played him in but he delayed his shot and Myhre was able to block.

Dietmar Hamann went close with a 23rd-minute free-kick which whistled just past the upright.

Just after the half-hour, Newcastle were awarded a penalty for a handball in the area, but Myhre guessed correctly and dived to his right to palm away Shearer's spot-kick.

Campbell rubbed salt into the wound two minutes before half-time when he fed Jeffers wide on the right and then arrived at the near post to tuck the resulting cross past Given.

Newcastle emerged determined after the break, but could not make the breakthrough in the face of some resolute defending.

Ketsbaia shot harmlessly wide on 51 minutes following good work by Maric and Hamann, and Gary Speed did the same a minute later after playing a neat one-two with the Georgian.

Given then denied Campbell, saving low from a well struck shot following a one-two with Jeffers.

Rob Lee forced Myhre to save well with a solid volley on 68 minutes, but Shearer was left to reflect on another missed opportunity three minutes after when he shot straight at the goalkeeper after being put through by Hamann.

The United skipper did score from the penalty spot eight minutes from time after being hauled down by Watson, and just failed to scramble the ball past Myhre three minutes later in a frantic finish.

Gemmill cemented his side's victory with 88 minutes gone as he latched on to a poor defensive header and drilled the ball past Given.

COVENTRY V M'BORO

Coventry were drawn back into the relegation battle on Saturday, following a 2-1 home defeat at the hands of Bryan Robson's resurgent Middlesbrough.

The opening 45 minutes were dull, neither goalkeeper required to make a save.

Darren Huckerby provided the few moments of excitement with his pace on the left flank for Coventry. He was denied by a vital tackle from Colin Cooper after a good through-ball from Gary McAllister and then fired into the side netting after turning Boro substitute Vladimir Kinder inside out.

John Aloisi, recalled to the Coventry starting line-up, then sent a header over the top and McAllister had a shot blocked by Steve Baker.

The second half was brighter in comparison and Magnus Hedman was grateful that Hamilton Ricard did not make better contact with a Dean Gordon cross, enabling the goalkeeper to save comfortably.

Coventry then gained the ascendancy, Kinder again

given a testing time by Huckerby. The Coventry forward forced the first meaningful save from Schwarzer with a low drive on 53 minutes.

Noel Whelan then saw a goal disallowed for a foul on Schwarzer following a looping centre from Huckerby.

The visitors broke the deadlock with a swift counter-attack after 64 minutes. Alun Armstrong released Kinder down the middle and his low 25-yard drive flew past Hedman.

Coventry retaliated however, and were level eight minutes later when McAllister played a one-two with Aloisi and then held off the challenge of Steve Vickers before planting a low shot past Schwarzer.

It was the signal for a grandstand finish by the Sky Blues, Schwarzer twice denying them with vital saves from Aloisi and Huckerby.

Gordon had the final say eight minutes from time though, striking a volley past Hedman through a crowd of players.

FOREST V TOTTENHAM

Anything other than a Spurs victory today would have been an injustice however, such was their dominance.

Spurs might have taken the lead in first half stoppage time, but Crossley saved an Allan Nielsen penalty after Richard Gough had fouled Iversen.

Edwards also had to clear off the line with the Forest keeper stranded after Tim Sherwood had turned the ball goalwards.

Armstrong saw a penalty claim waved away when he appeared to be upended by Edwards, while the striker headed over from six yards with the home defence seemingly absent.

As the hosts battled to keep the visitors out, Nielsen fired just wide and Armstrong failed to cross to Iversen with the goal gaping.

Forest had a handful of chances, with Dougie Freedman again their most dangerous player.

With time running out, Spurs goalkeeper Ian Walker denied Marlon Harewood when the young striker found himself in the clear but an equaliser would not come.



David Ginola...Even his brilliance couldn't produce a winning goal at Forest.

Compiled and written by

Daryl Katz

UK

League Highlights

LIVERPOOL V ASTON VILLA

Aston Villa secured a 1-0 victory over Liverpool at Anfield on Saturday, providing further evidence of the inability of the home side to compete at the top of the Premiership.

Liverpool were taken apart early and were lucky to escape conceding a penalty in the first minute when it looked as if Jamie Carragher had brought down Julian Joachim in the box.

When a Mark Draper free-kick was nodded across goal by Ian Taylor, Carragher was forced into desperate measures to clear off the line under pressure from Gareth Southgate.

Villa's midfield mobility and the industry of young Lee Hendrie caused Liverpool all sorts of problems and Dion Dublin tested the hosts further with a shot on the turn from 20 yards.

Liverpool's attacks were fleeting, Karl-Heinz Riedle going closest but failing to find the target following good work by Dominic Matteo. A cross from Stig Bjornebye then forced Bosnich into a flying save with Paul Ince charging in.

Liverpool's aerial vulnerability continued to cause problems, and they had survived several scares before Villa scored after 33 minutes.

Alan Wright's cross from the left was turned into the danger area by Joachim, and Taylor eased into the six-yard box unchallenged to push the ball into the corner.

Villa almost scored a second a minute from the break when Carragher had to hook acrobatically off the line after Dublin's header from Steve Watson's cross had beaten David James.

After the break, Oyvind Leonhardsen came on for

Bjornebye and gave the Liverpool midfield more shape and purpose.

Steve McManaman missed a chance to equalise when Riedle and Leonhardsen presented him with a clear shot from 12 yards, but his effort was timid and ill-directed.

Riedle then pulled back another low cross, and this time McManaman saw his shot blocked in the area.

Four minutes from time, Robbie Fowler had his first real chance, latching onto a Riedle flick to send a header over Bosnich and agonisingly wide of the post.



Aussie Mark Bosnich was brilliant for Villa as Liverpool yet again lost at home.

MAN UTD V SHEFF WED

Manchester United rounded off a fine week with a comfortable 3-0 victory over Sheffield Wednesday at Old Trafford on Saturday.

Ryan Giggs, Peter Schmeichel, Ronny Johnsen and Andy Cole were given the afternoon off, while David Beckham and Dwight Yorke found themselves on the bench as Alex Ferguson rested his stars ahead of the Champions League semifinal second leg at Juventus on Wednesday.

The opening 30 minutes were well contested. Roy Keane tested Pavel Smicek from 30 yards out before the lively Italian Benito Carbone forced a great save from Raimond van der Gouw, the Dutchman tipping his curling effort away for a corner.

Two minutes later Carbone let rip with a dipping shot from outside the area, which dropped behind the United goal.

Teddy Sheringham then forced a save from Smicek with a 20-yard free-kick before he went close again with a header.

United patiently probed at the Owls defence and on 34 minutes they made the breakthrough. Keane knocked Jesper Blomqvist's cross back for Sheringham to find Ole-Gunnar Solskjær with an overhead kick and the Norwegian made no mistake from eight yards to score his 17th of the season.

The goal seemed to kill the game as a contest and Solskjær nearly had a second two minutes later only for Smicek to save his shot on the greasy surface.

Just before half-time United virtually sealed victory when Solskjær crossed for Sheringham to head home his third goal of the season and his first in the league since the opening day of the campaign.

The second saw both sides going through the motions, with Wednesday struggling to move the ball out of their own half.

Just after the hour, Sheringham set up Scholes to fire home a third for United from just inside the area. Ferguson then brought off Jaap Stam and Keane for a well-earned rest as United cruised to victory.



United's Teddy Sheringham leaves Sheffield Wednesday's Peter Atherton in his wake after scoring only his third goal for the season.

CHARLTON V LEEDS

Charlton produced a fine performance at The Valley on Saturday, battling to a 1-1 draw with Leeds United in a match that the relegation-threatened side deserved to win.

Leeds arrived on the back of an unbeaten run of eight matches, but must have been surprised by the quality of football produced by the home side.

Andy Hunt fired in two early shots to test Nigel Martyn and Lucas Radebe had to make a pair of vital interceptions to deny Hunt and Martin Pringle.

Full-back Danny Mills made a series of powerful right-wing runs, but it was a nimble knockdown header by Hunt from Chris Powell's left-wing cross which created the opening for record signing Graham Stuart to score after 20 minutes.

Despite creating little, Leeds managed a surprise equaliser four minutes later through Jonathan Woodgate.

Ian Harte swung over a free-kick from the right and Charlton striker Hunt failed to pick up Woodgate's run as the Leeds man nipped in to force home his first goal of the season past static goalkeeper Andy Petterson.



Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink gets past Charlton's Danny Mills. The Leeds star was injured during the game.

Charlton continued attacking however, and Stuart just failed to reach a fine ball from Mills with the goal gaping.

Mills then provided another anxious moment for Martyn, this time with a powerful left-foot shot which the goalkeeper managed to clear.

Harry Kewell, pushing forward after Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink succumbed to injury, broke clear down the Charlton right just before half-time and sent in a low cross, only to see Richard Rufus clear the ball in front of Alan Smith.

In the 55th minute, Charlton had the opportunity to regain the lead when Woodgate brought down Pringle to concede a penalty. Paul Mortimer stepped up to take the spot-kick, but the ball came back off the post as it became clear that this was not to be Charlton's day.

The home side suffered a further setback nine minutes later when Rufus was sent off after a crude challenge on Leeds substitute Jones.

The 10-man Londoners made light of their disadvantage though, and battled away undaunted in search of a winner.

Veteran substitute Mark Bright headed inches wide in the dying seconds, but Alan Curbishley's men had to be satisfied with a share of the spoils.



Australian and Leeds star, Harry Kewell had a fine game against Charlton.

WEST HAM V DERBY

West Ham United produced a fine display on Saturday, demolishing Jim Smith's Derby County 5-1 at Upton Park.

Derby took the initiative early on, keeping Shaka Hislop busy as they looked to take control of the game.

West Ham absorbed the pressure though, Trevor Sinclair and Frank Lampard both going close before Paolo Di Canio struck the opening goal on 19 minutes.

The Italian moved onto his left foot on the edge of the box and his shot took a wicked deflection off Spencer Prior to leave Russell Hoult stranded in the Derby goal.

Nine minutes later Marc-Vivien Foé showed just why Harry Redknapp had pursued him with such determination. The Cameroonian lifted the ball over the visiting defence and into the path of Di Canio.

The enigmatic striker confused the Derby defenders before squaring for Israeli international Eyal Berkovic to sidefoot home.

The Hammers continued to pile on the pressure as Ian Wright, Di Canio, Berkovic and Lampard all went close.

Ten minutes after the restart, Hoult could only parry a shot from Lampard into the path of Wright, and the returning striker made no mistake with a confident finish.

West Ham were rampant now and it seemed that there was nothing Derby could do to stem the flow of claret and blue shirts which kept pouring through their defence.

On the hour, Neil Ruddock got in on the act, rising above Prior at the far post to meet Sinclair's cross and head home.

Four minutes later, skipper Steve Lomas charged up the right flank and sent over the perfect which Sinclair met with a deadly finish.

In the final minutes, Wanchope produced a superb solo effort as he surged through the Hammers' defence, rounded Hislop and slid the ball into an empty net.

**STAN
LAZARIDIS**

(AND COUSIN MANUEL!)

**WEST HAM
AND
AUSTRALIA**

PONY

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